UPPER ROOM Messages

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UPPER ROOM MESSAGES

by

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DEDICATORY

To My Sainted Mother

TO WHOM I OWE MY EXISTENCE,
WHO WATCHED OVER ME DURING MY YEARS
OF INFANCY AND CHILDHOOD,
TO WHOSE GUIDANCE AND PRAYERS
I AM FOREVER INDEBTED,
I GRATEFULLY DEDICATE THIS VOLUME.

PREFACE

In offering this volume to the public no apology is necessary. A definite conviction has been obeyed in its preparation and publication.

The messages published herein have been delivered at various times and places. The title was suggested, in part, by the subject of the first chapter, and, in part, by the nature of the various messages of the book.

When the second printing was exhausted the ministry of the volume appeared to have only really begun, and friends of the "Upper Room Messages" insisted upon a new printing of the volume, which is now available to the public.

The Author is happy in his Gospel ministry direct to the many, to whom he speaks constantly, and rejoices that his messages are reaching tens of thousands, of others, by the medium of the printed page, to whom he has not been privileged to come personally. He sends this new edition of Upper Room Messages forward to his prayers, that God may make it a means of grace to many readers.

Very sincerely,

J. A. HUFFMAN.

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Upper Room Messages

CHAPTER I

UPPER ROOM TEACHINGS OF JESUS CONCERNING THE HOLY SPIRIT

"It is expedient for you that I go away: for if I go not away the Comforter will not come unto you; but if I depart, I will send him unto you." John 16:7.

Having ascended the open stairway, leading to the upper room meeting place, in the city of Jerusalem, is assembled a small company of disciples, listening to the closing address of the world's greatest preacher, Jesus Christ. For three years they have listened to his simple yet profound teachings; but some things had been reserved, only to be made known immediately before his going away. Now he draws the comparatively small company of disciples closer to him, and, besides speaking words of farewell, he gives them an enlarged or clear vision of the future of His work.

There have been (including the present) three dispensations—The dispensation of the Father, that of the Son, and that of the Holy Spirit. Each member of the Trinity has had a dispensation which was pre-eminently His. In neither dispensation was a single member of the Trinity inactive, but have in all dispensations co-operated. The dispensation of the Father was long and was occupied by the work of creation and getting the world ready for the coming of Christ. The dispensation of the Son was comparatively short, extending during his ministry, to Pentecost, and was occupied with the potential work of redemption.

The Holy Spirit's dispensation began at Pentecost and continues until the end of the age. It is occupied with effectually carrying out the work which was potentially accomplished by Christ.

It was worthy of special note that the Holy Spirit is not merely "an influence" but a personality. To him are assigned all of the attributes of personality, and he should never be referred to by the use of the impersonal pronoun "it," but reverently, not only as a person but as a member of the Trinity, as well.

Jesus here taught plainly the *expediency* of his going away. A careful study of his teaching reveals a divine philosophy.

The triumph of the ages had been won when he, the son of man, had met man's powerful enemy, Satan, on the open battle field, and wrested from him the laurel of championship, which Satan had taken from man in his Edenic state. This occurred in the three-fold temptation, just after his baptism which inaugurated Him into His ministry, in the desert, on the temple pinnacle, and on the mountain top. Satan having attacked Him in the trinity of ways, parallel with the three-fold temptation in Eden, was out-generaled, and defeated and skulked away in shameful defeat.

Having completed his work of service, his work of sacrifice must yet be accomplished. This was of such a nature that is required the giving of his life to accomplish it. Hence the expediency of His going away.

Further, in the divine order of things, the Holy Spirit could not come until He went away; and since the coming of the Holy Spirit depended upon His going, and the coming of the Holy Spirit was necessary, the expediency of His going away is plain.

Closely related to the expediency of Christ's going

away is the expediency of the Spirit's coming. Let us see if we can discover the divine philosophy of the Holy Spirit's coming.

The fulness of time had come for the beginning of his administration. While it is impossible for man to understand the wisdom of God, in advance, it is now an easy matter to look back and see that the time had come for the Holy Spirit to enter upon His ministry.

As a member of the Trinity, having co-operated in the dispensations of the Father and the Son, he was thoroughly familiar with the affairs of both administrations, hence eminently qualified for the third and succeeding one.

Then, too, He possessed a qualification for administering the affairs of the new and practical administration which Christ did not possess. He, being a purely spiritual personality, unhampered by a physical being, was especially adapted and pre-eminently qualified to administer the affairs of the incoming administration.

The teaching of Jesus relative to the office of the Holy Spirit to the world is plain.

He Ministers

His first office to the world is to "convict" or "reprove" or "convince" of sin, of righteousness and judgment, St. John 16:8. The Greek word (ἐλεγχω,) used here, is a strong word and indicates that His office is an important one. It indicates the legal aspect of His office. He, like a prosecuting attorney, brings the sinner to the bar of justice, declares his guilt, convinces him of his unrighteousness, by measuring him with the standard of righteousness, and points out to him the penalty of his crime.

Besides this peculiar office of the Holy Spirit, by which he shows the sinner his guilt, his poverty and his penalty,

he has another very important office to the world. He is to administer the affairs of grace. Here he becomes the acquitting judge and the dispenser of riches which may be found difficult to calculate.

When a wealthy man dies he leaves an estate. He usually leaves a will or testiment, and frequently names the administrator, who is to have charge of the affairs of the estate. In this case, Jesus Christ is the "wealthy man," and the estate includes all that there is in atonement merit. The Holy Spirit is the appointed administrator. Who can estimate the wealth of the estate? No figures begin to express it. When compared with the wealth of atonement merit, the combined wealth of Morgan, Rockefeller, Carnegie, McKenzie, Astor and that of all the capitalists of the world combined dwindles into a paltry sum. When the wealth of atonement, merit is properly considered, we would change one word in the poem, "love" to wealth, and say:

"We all the heavens a parchment made;
Could we the sea with ink then fill;
Were every man a scribe by trade,
And every stick on earth a quill:
To write the *wealth* of God on high,
Would drain the ocean dry;
Nor could the scroll contain the whole,
Though stretched from sky to sky."

In the will or testament of Christ there are some stipulations, and the estate *must* be administered according to these stipulations. The Holy Spirit, as administrator, cannot do otherwise than administer the estate accordingly. He, however, is in perfect harmony with the Father and the Son, and takes pleasure in carrying out their combined will,

Let us examine the recorded "will" of Jesus Christ

and note one or two of the stipulations. This will reveal the program for the Holy Spirit's operation.

The first stipulation in the "will" is that of pardon. "In whom we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of His grace." Eph. 1:7. This item of the "will" is repeated in Col. 1:14, which reads practically the same.

The next stipulation in the "will" of Christ, relative to the estate of grace is concerning cleansing: "Wherefore Jesus also, that he might sanctify the people with his own blood, suffered without the gate." Heb. 13:12. Relative to the same provision we read: "Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church, and gave himself for it; that he might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word, that he might present it to himself a glorious church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing; but that it should be holy and without blemish." Eph. 5:25-27.

These stipulations are plain and unmistakeable; consequently indicate how the Holy Spirit must administer. It is then the Holy Spirit who is the agent of conviction and of pardon. He, too, is the gent of man's sanctification. In a way understood to the Trinity alone, and in keeping with the will of Christ, he administers the *wealth* of atonement merit of pardon and of cleansing.

Occasionally some one objects to the teaching that the Holy Spirit is the agent of our sanctification. The criticism is scarcely worthy of mention. Such texts as Rom. 15:16 and 2 Thess. 2:13, also the teachings of the whole New Testament concerning the Holy Spirit, make this fact plain.

Besides this office to the world, the Holy Spirit sustains a peculiar office to the Christian.

He Abides:

"With" (μετὰ,) us, in fellowship. John 14:16. The worldling cannot understand the Christian, whose life is absolutely abandoned to the Holy Spirit, but looks upon him with a measure of pity. But, while the sinner is searching here and there for amusement and entertainment, he sings:

"I'm never lonely any more,
Since the Comforter has come."

Alongside (παρὰ,) of us, as a personal presence, John 14:17.

The personality of the Holy Spirit is intensely real to him who has His constant companionship. As a personal friend He walks alongside of him who meets the conditions of His holy companionship, and whose life is perfectly yielded to the will of God.

"In" (ἐν,) us as a vitalizing energy. John 14:17. There is an unseen force or power, which moves the consecrated Christian to world-surprising services. It constrains him to labours and sacrifices which mark his life as unselfish. The secret is the Holy Spirit's presence *in* the life as a vitalizing energy.

He Teaches:

Brings to "remembrance" what Jesus said. This doubtless refers to the special help which the disciples were to receive in recalling the things Jesus had said, for the purpose of writing the books of the New Testament. This we speak of as inspiration. The Holy Spirit's office has not ceased in this respect, for he still brings to the memory of the Christian something which Jesus said, and which relates to his particular case, and meets his particular need. This, to the one who understands this office of the Holy Spirit, is divinely real.

He speaks nothing of himself, John 16:13; *but reveals Christ, and glorifies Him.* John 16:14. Quite as much as to be slighted, the Holy Spirit must be grieved at being exalted to the exclusion of the mention of Jesus Christ. Occasionally we hear people pray to the Holy Spirit; mention his name often in prayer and testimony, and scarcely mention the name of Christ. Nowhere are we told to pray to the Holy Spirit, nor in his name, but to the Father, in the name of the Son. Such an undue exaltation of the Holy spirit reveals a lack of knowledge concerning Him, and indicates the absence of well rounded christian experience.

He bears witness to Christ, John 15:26. As the successor in administration, the Holy Spirit is not a rival of Christ. He simply took up the work of carrying out, practically, what Christ potentially accomplished in his life and death. He stamps as genuine everything which Jesus did.

He causes to bear witness: "But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Spirit is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth." Acts. 1:8. The Holy Spirit not only, himself, witnesses to Christ but prompts all who have received him to do so, from the home circle to the ends of the earth.

He guides into all truth. John 16:13. The Holy Spirit is a most aggressive advocate of the truth. Further, he is in perfect harmony with the truth. He never leads contrary to the truth, and every impression which he gives is in perfect accord with the written word. Any impression received contrary to the word of God is from another source.

He helps in prayer. Rom. 8:26. While we are not to pray to him, he helps us to pray to God. This he does by making up for our inability and ignorance. We are told that we know not the things for which we should pray, and

evidently we cannot express our conscious need. The needs of the soul cannot be expressed in finite terms. Language of mortals is inadequate to express immortal desires. Here the Holy Spirit's office is important. When we pray, the Holy Spirit catches up the expressible and unutterable longings of the soul, translates them into a celestial language and presents them before the throne of grace.

He gives the prophetic vision. "He will show you things to come." John 16:13. That person who has the Holy Spirit as a companion and teacher has a vision which exceeds all others. He, prophet like, sees afar off. He, by this prophetic or supernatural vision, sees the consummation of all things in Jesus Christ. This vision is a wonderful stimulus to toil and is, in reality, a necessary equipment for largest service. It is necessary to enable us to work patiently and sacrificingly when there is no immediate reward. It is necessary equipment to enable us to correctly determine spiritual values.

In this day of erroneous doctrines, it is highly essential that we understand the office and work of the Holy Spirit. The upper room teachings of Jesus give a clear understanding of both his office and work.

There are various expressions concerning the Holy Spirit, which represent the various aspects of his office and work. Failing to comprehend this fact leads to various fanatical ideas. Reference is made to the "baptism," the "anointing," and "sealing," etc. Misguided teachers would have each represent a distinct work of the Holy Spirit, when they are simply various expressions of the Holy Spirit's office and work. These are cited by Gordon as follows:

"Baptism" is the historic word,—"He shall baptize you with the Holy Spirit, and with fire." Matt. 3:11.

"Anointing" is the power word,—"But the anointing

which ye have received of him abideth in you," etc. I John 2:27.

"Filling" is the experience word,—Acts 4:8, 9:17.

"Earnest" is the prophetic word,—"Which is the earnest of our inheritance," etc. Eph. 1:14.

"Sealing" is the property word—"You are sealed unto the day of redemption." Eph. 4:30.

Seeing the beauty of a life perfectly abandoned to God and led by the Holy Spirit, who would not want to thus lose himself in the will of God! Christ went away, for it was expedient that the Holy Spirit should come.

CHAPTER II

WALKING WITH GOD OR KEEPING STEP WITH THE INFINITE.

"Enoch walked with God: and he was not, for God took him," Gen. 5:24.

The language of this brief Scripture verse sounds very much as if it had been selected from the New Testament, and we are almost surprised when we discover that the text is from Genesis, the first book of the Bible. It is sufficiently spiritual in tone to do credit to St. John, and evangelical enough to have been penned by St. Paul; yet the words were recorded by Moses, many centuries before Christ. One fact stands out beautifully; that while the Bible contains sixty-six books, was penned by about forty different writers during a period of no less than fifteen hundred years, yet it was dictated by God, from its beginning to its close. From its first to its closing sentence there is harmony and unity. Its revelation is progressive, culminating in the largest revelation which God ever gave to the world of Himself, which was Jesus Christ. From this brief biography of Enoch we find that it was possible for men to "walk with God" in his day, as well as in the present time.

Again, we would not be surprised if such a biography would have been written of a man who lived before sin came into the world, as the language would be suited to one who lived in an unfallen Eden, who linked arm in arm with God, had walked up and down its blissful paths. But Enoch did not live in Eden, but in a sinful, cursed world, surrounded with environment much like that in which we are compelled to live today, yet he "walked with God."

Two Planes

Keeping in mind man's exalted position before sin came, and the position he occupies since the fall, we are compelled to conclude that there are two distinct planes upon which men have walked—a higher or more exalted plane before sin came, and a lower or less exalted plane, since the fall. This lowering of man's position from an exalted plane, surrounded by heavenly environment, to a low, earthly plane, surrounded by sinful environment is the result of one great and terrible fact, *sin*. Earth, which appears to have been created but a little lower than heaven, and which may be thought of as an annex of heaven, lost her exalted and dignified position, severing her connection through disobedience. Sin caused a great chasm to intervene between God and man, between heaven and earth.

Spanning the Chasm.

Much as man might regret his loss, and long for a restored relation to God and heaven, there was no resource at his command, no power by which he could span the great chasm caused by sin. The world was ransacked for material to span the chasm between God and man, but to no avail. Perhaps the highest culmination of this effort was heathen philosophy, which was a desperate, determined, death-gripping effort to know God, but which resulted in keen and bitter disappointment.

Knowing from the beginning that all of man's efforts to span this great chasm would result in failure, God early found a solution for the great problem. It might be noted, in this connection, that God only does for us the things we cannot do for ourselves. No doubt if earth had had any resources to bridge the great distance between man and God, He would have left us to our own resources.

God spanned the great chasm by coming to man's plane in the person of His Son. Man could not rise to the plane of God and walk with Him, but God could and did come to man's plane, and walk with man. The Jews denied Him; the Romans crucified Him; the world rejected Him; and men are still speaking reproachfully of Him; but the fact remains, that He was God walking among men.

The mystery of the incarnation is insolvable, nevertheless, the incarnation is the greatest world fact. It was the linking together of infinity with finiteness, of power with weakness, of greatness with nothingness, of wealth with poverty, of exaltation with humility, of God with man. St. Paul wrote the most wonderful biography of Christ ever written in so few words, incorporating into it this great mystery, saying: "And without controversy great is the mystery of godliness: God was manifest in the flesh, justified in the Spirit, seen of angels, preached unto the Gentiles, believed on in the word, received up into glory," I Timothy 3:16.

Christ came not to stay upon man's plane, but to link Himself up arm in arm with man, and lift man to a higher or more exalted plane. It was because Christ came to man that walking with God is possible; otherwise walking with God would have been forever impossible. It was by virtue of the Christ of promise that Enoch walked with God.

To one in olden times God gave a beautiful vision of the chasm spanned. It was Jacob. While on his way to Haran, on foot and alone, night overtook him, where there was not so much as a cottage in which to find shelter. Wearied with his journey, he lay down to sleep, with the open, starry heaven for his canopy and a stone for his pillow, and was soon fast asleep. In his dream he saw heaven opened, and a ladder set upon the earth, with its top

reaching into heaven, and Jehovah standing above it. Upon the ladder were angels descending and ascending. While the Bible gives no interpretation of Jacob's dream, it indicates that it was more than an ordingary dream resulting from an overloaded stomach or unholy thoughts. In the morning, upon awaking, he recognized the fact that God was in that place; made vows to Jehovah; also erected a monument, christening it *Bethel,* meaning House of God. God was above the ladder; He was interested in the purpose for which it served. It was the spanning of the distance between heaven and earth, and made the connection which had been broken by sin. Whatever else the dream might have meant, it is evident that it signified that the chasm between God and man, between heaven and earth was spanned, and that heaven is again accessible to man.

Walking with God, Experientially.

Walking with God has two sides, an experiential and a practical. The experiential prefaces the practical, for a man cannot be practically or outwardly what he is not experientially or inwardly. Jesus taught this plainly when He said: "A good tree cannot bring forth evil fruit, neither can a corrupt tree bring forth good fruit," Matt. 7:18. Practically all of the reproach and shame heaped upon the cause of Christ is a result of persons attempting or professing to live something which they do not possess. To be practically right or to walk with God practically, we must walk with Him experientially.

To be experientially right means that we have appropriated to our hearts all that is included in atonement merit. There is all included in atonement merit that the soul needs now and forever, but there is nothing included in the atonement which is superfluous or unnecessary. Consequently,

all that is provided in the atonement is needed in order to place man in right relation with God, experientially.

There are two great, outstanding, definitely stipulated provisions in the atonement, which are provided to meet two equally outstanding and definite needs in human experience. They are provisions for pardon or forgiveness and sanctification or cleansing. Let us note these stipulations. "In whom we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of sins," Col. 1:14. "In whom we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of His grace," Eph. 1:7. These two texts refer to the atonement provision for pardon or forgiveness. Please note the two following texts which refer to the atonement provision for sanctification. "Wherefore Jesus also, that He might sanctify the people with His own blood, suffered without the gate," Heb. 13:12. "Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church, and gave Himself for it; that He might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word, that He might present it to Himself a glorious church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing; but that it should be holy and without blemish," Eph. 5:25-27. In this last text it is specifically stated that this provision of atonement merit is for the church,—not worldlings nor unregenerated, but the church, the called out, the regenerated.

These are by no means the only scriptures setting forth these stipulations of atonement merit. There are plenty of them, but these point out these provisions specifically.

Pardon and sanctification represent the divine side of Christian experience, which have their corresponding human sides. The human side of pardon is repentance, and that of sanctification is consecration. These two experiences, which are closely and vitally related, the first restoring man

to innocence and the second to purity and spiritual power, constitute the experiential side of walking with God. They result in a life of absolute abandonment to God, to a losing of one's self in the will of God, to a perfect agreement between God and man, to a Spirit-filled life of joy and usefulness. No two can walk together "except they be agreed." Here is the agreement which makes walking with God possible.

Walking with God, Practically.

Walking with God experientially will result in a close walk with God in a practical way. It is the outward or practical life which others see, and by which they recognize us, and as a result of which they place their estimates upon the Christian religion and Christ. They do not see our experiences, but they do witness our practices. It was relative to a practical walk with God that Paul wrote. "Ye are our epistle written in our hearts, *known and read of all men,*" II Cor. 3:2. People do not read their Bibles much these days, but they are reading our lives. Even the worldling knows what to expect of professed Christians. As men are going to judge Christ and the Christian religion by what they see in the lives of professed Christians, it is very important that we walk with God, first experientially, so as to be able to walk with Him practically, in order that we may convince the world of the genuineness of the religion of Christ. The life which conforms to this standard of experience and practice will be a continuous rebuke to sin and a constant benediction to righteousness.

Let us not specificially what it means to walk with God practically.

First, it means to *know* God's will and to *do* it. Too many there are who profess to be Christians, who evidence little desire to know God's will. They seem to consider

God's an insignificant matter, while they proceed in accordance with their own arbitrary desires and wills. Many plead ignorance of God's will, when in reality it is simply unwillingness to obey it.

One of the lamentable things is, that so many professed Christians ignore the source of obtaining God's will for their lives, the Bible. In defense of some pet sin or idol more than one has said: "When God tells me to give it up I will do so, but not until then." The testimony of such constitute an indictment against themselves. They have ignored the fact that God has told them plainly in His word that such things displease Him. Persons who refuse to obey God's will, as revealed in His word, need look for no special revelations. It is not revelation such persons desire, it is simply a carnal security for their sin. The Bible is not only a book of yesterday, but a book for to-day and for every tomorrow. No human problem has ever arisen or ever will arise, for which the Bible has not contained a divine solution in advance. It is the authoritative answer to every question and the final solution to every problem. To walk with God practically is to *know* His will and to *do* it.

He who walks with God will make God's interests his, and will seek to win souls to Christ. It is a great honor that God has bestowed upon us, in making us co-workers with Him. Too frequently we have gone about our Christian labors, forgetting that the work was not ours but God's, and that He was vitally interested in it. Because of this we failed to seek His wisdom and guidance, fully; looked too much upon our work as commonplace, and failed in no small measure. A close, practical walk with God, resulting from a right relation to God experientially, will give us new visions of duty and opportunity. We will recognize the work as God's, with great honor conferred upon us, in being per-

mitted to co-operate with Him. We will make His interests ours, in the measure that they touch the radius of our lives; we will seek His wisdom and counsel in matters, great and small.

The Negative Side.

What we have said about walking with God is principally upon the positive side. There is, however, a negative side to walking with God. "He was not." Of course this phrase refers to Enoch's absence, because of God having taken him, but may introduce to us a few things upon the negative side of walking with God.

Religion is not only a problem in addition, but also of subtraction. It gives us some things, but takes away others. It causes us to begin to do some things, but also to cease to do some others. Even the baptism of the Holy Spirit has both the negative and positive sides: it is for both purging and power. So walking with God has both the positive and negative sides.

"He was not" occupying himself with the laying up of treasures upon earth. Had Enoch been, God would likely not have favored him with the enviable translation experience. The writer of The Hebrews says of Enoch: "For before his translation he had this testimony that he pleased God," Heb. 11:5. This little philosophical word "for" suggests that the special favor conferred upon Enoch was a result of the fact that "he pleased God." He who, Enoch like, desires to please God and walk with Him cannot be occupied with hoarding up earthly treasures, accumulating stocks and bonds, acquiring broad acres and seeking selfish ease which results from the possession of much of this world's goods. He, with whom we must agree, in order to walk with God, said: "Lay not up for yourselves treasures upon earth, where moth and rust doth corrupt, and where thieves

break through and steal: But lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust doth corrupt, and where thieves do not break through nor steal," Matt. 6:19-20. If God has entrusted us with any small amount of his world's goods it must be held in trust for Him, and stewarded for Him alone.

There is great danger that, when Christ comes with translation glories for His saints, many who profess to love and serve Him will be too busy to go with Him. They will be too closely linked to earthly treasures to leave them so suddenly. My brethren: let us wear this old world as a loose cloak, ready to drop it at any moment; otherwise we may be disappointed at the appearing of our Lord.

"He was not" absorbed with timely interests with no time nor disposition to pray. As apostasy characterized Enoch's day, so it characterizes ours. Enoch lived before the flood, and Jesus said: "But as the days of Noah were, so shall also the coming of the Son of man be," Matt. 24:37. Despite the apostasy of his day, Enoch walked with God. No one can walk with God without much and frequent prayer. Even Jesus spent much time in prayer, sometimes all night upon the mountain side alone. How about our secret closets and our family altars? This is also an age of hurry, an age of the automobile and flying machine. There is high tension and great pressure. He who walks with God must step aside from the pressisng throngs of duties and demands, and take time to pray, to read God's word, to meditate upon God, to make use of the heaven-provided means of grace. Pray! Pray!!! Pray!! is the oft-repeated counsel of Jesus and the apostles. "Watch and pray, for ye know not when the time is." Mark 13:33.

"He was not" hungering after the seeking for worldly pleasures. Had Enoch desired worldly pleasures there were

plenty at hand. Jesus speaks of the age in which Enoch lived thus: "In the days that were before the flood they were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, until the day that Noah entered into the ark." These worldly pleasures did not appeal to Enoch. He had something which satisfied him so completely, that these things appeared cheap and trashy compared to what he enjoyed. He who must supplement his religion with worldly pleasures and amusements severely indicts the genuineness of his religion. The true religion of Christ does not need to be supplemented with moving picture shows, theatres, circuses, etc. All of the worldly pleasures and amusements which can be laid at the feet of that one who truly walks with God, have little attraction for him.

The Taking Process.

The brief phrase: "God took him," is also significant. Although it refers to the close of his earthly life, it is evident that it has as its background a life of absolute abandonment and complete obedience to God. All desire such a close of their earthly careers, but we must not forget that the taking process begins here and now. God chooses us all for Himself, but His choice must be seconded by us, in order to avail us anything.

The taking process continues every moment of our Christian pilgrimage. He who allows Christ to place His arm in his and walks with Him, will feel the "everlasting arms" supporting him every step of the way. Jesus said: "Lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world," Matt. 28:19. God said: "I will help thee; yea, I will uphold thee with the right hand of my righteousness," Isa 41:10.

While the taking process begins here and now, and continues throughout the christian life, it terminates in heaven.

It introduces us not only to the good things which Christians enjoy in this life, but to all the good things which God has prepared for those who love Him. Let us ask ourselves the following questions. Have I seconded God's choice? Am I walking with God? Is He leading me by His hand? Happy is that man whose biography may be written in the language of the text, brief but significant: He "walked with God: and he was not for God took him."

CHAPTER III

THE LOVE TRAGEDY OF THE CROSS.

Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends," St. John 15:13.

The Bible contains the greatest love story ever written. It is one which extends from the throne, by the way of the manger cradle, the garden and the cross, back again to the right hand of the Father. It was the largest revelation God ever made of Himself, proving that He has permitted His attributes of love and mercy to predominate in all His dealings with the human, race.

The Humbled Christ.

Angels and Arch-angels fell before the exalted Son of God, to render to Him the glory and honor due Him as one who shared in the creation of all things. He must have been a center attraction of heaven, possessing as He did an eternity of existence with God. The condescension is almost inconceivable. His incarnation was the linking together of infinity with finiteness, of greatness with nothingness, of strength and weakness, of eternity with a span.

The advent of the exalted one was so humble that few of our births equalled its lowliness. None of us would be willing to have our children born in such humble environments. With a stable for His inn, a manger for His cradle, and the beasts of the stall His earliest guests, the Son of God made His advent into this world. His heavenly robes were exchanged for swaddling clothes, His honor for humility, and, His retinue of angels for the companionship of Joseph and Mary.

No sooner was the advent of the Savior heralded, than wicked, jealous men plotted for his death. As an exile in Egypt He sojourned, while the bloody hand of Herod slew the innocents of Judea. His was the lot to evade kings and priests, who at times sought to destroy Him.

Another step in the humiliation of the exalted Son of God is marked by His homelessness. He was either too poor to possess a home, or too busy to provide one. One of the most pathetic things which He ever said related to His homelessness. Comparing Himself with creatures of the lower order, He said: "Foxes have holes, and birds of the air have their nests; but the Son of Man hath not where to lay His head," Matt. 8:20. St. Mark states that He was with the wild beasts (Mark 1:13), which evidently means that, for some cause or other, He made the beasts His companions. More than once He spent all night upon the mountain, with the starry heavens as His canopy. He was laid in a borrowed manger cradle; lived in borrowed homes; rode upon a borrowed beast; and finally was buried in a borrowed tomb. So complete was the homelessness of the exalted Son of God when He dwelt among men.

As though His humble advent and homelessness failed to complete His humiliation, another step was necessary. The self-sacrificing ministry of Christ affords the only perfect specimen of service the world has ever had. He was the servant of servants. He never subtracted from the comforts of others to add to His. His whole life was one continuous outflow of help and service. He unstopped deaf ears; opened blind eyes; cleansed the lepers; healed the palsied, and raised the very dead. No matter how poor and despised they were who came to Him, He proved Himself their servant. A blind Bartimaeus, a demon-possessed Magdalene or a disreputable but penitent tax-gatherer could ob-

tain his services as readily as the honored and renowned. Until Jesus came, and completely upset the false philosophy and practices of men, he was considered greatest who possessed the greatest number of servants, and was most served. Jesus taught by precept, and exemplified by practice, that he is greatest, who serves most—is the servant of all.

The Abandoned Christ.

"Humiliation" with all that this term implies is not the word which expresses the condescension of Jesus Christ. Go with Him to the lowest round in the ladder of humiliation, and there are yet successive steps in the condescension. He was not only the humbled Christ, but the abandoned Christ.

First, Jesus was abandoned by His own people. The Jews had made the special conservators of the monotheistic faith; had been favored with peculiar blessings; had been singing songs of Messianic interpretation; had beheld life-like, prophetic portraits of the Savior of the World; had shed much sacrificial blood, every drop of which was but a promissory note, pledging the full payment of redemption's price, in the death of Christ; but when He came they completely rejected and abandoned Him. One can scarcely refrain from concluding that tears must have coursed the cheeks of the tender-hearted Christ, as He recited the calamities which were to befall the city of His own people, Jerusalem, when He exclaimed: "O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, thou that killest the prophets, and stoneth them which are sent unto thee, how often would I have gathered thy children together, even as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings, and ye would not," Matt. 23:37.

Unlawfully the Jews arrested Him, according to Him a mock trial only, with false accusers hired. Violating their own law relating to criminals, they delivered Him to be put to death, without further possibility of acquittal. When

given their choice between a notorious, murder criminal, Barabbas, and the innocent Christ, they immediately chose Barabbas. So intent were the Jews upon the death of Jesus, that they cried: "Let Him be crucified, His blood be on us and on our children," Matt. 27:23, 25.

But the Jews were not in civil authority, and could only pronounce the death sentence, not execute it. This was dependent upon the Romans, who were in power. Strange as it may seem, men who are bent upon evil, can always find accomplices. Even Pilate and Herod, who were previously political enemies, became friends that day, uniting in the evil plot against Christ, Luke 32:12. Pilate pretentiously washed his hands in innocency, but as Roman governor, gave Jesus over to his soldiers to be crucified. Having put a purple robe upon Him; mocked Him; smitten Him with the palms of their hands, they pressed down upon His brow a crown of thorns, and led Him away to be crucified. With cruel spikes they nailed Him to the cross.

Abandonment at the hands of His own people, acceded to by the Romans, was comparatively a minor grief, compared to another dagger of sorrow which had struck His heart. It was abandonment by His own disciples. Three years He had befriended, taught and led them. If any would befriend Him, surely it would be they. Only yesterday they had volunteered to die with Him; but now they have forsaken Him. The trinity of denials of Peter, emphasized with bitter curses, must have been so many daggers of anguish, as they fell upon His ears in the palace of Caiaphas. Abandoned by His own disciples, the only earthly hope of unbroken friendship Who can fathom the sorrow?

But there remains one more step in the path of condescension. Abandonment by Jew, Roman and the disciples, bitter as it is, is not sufficient. He must yet be abandoned

by God. Why? Because He came to take the sinner's place, and the sinner is abandoned of God.

There are those who would interpret the exclamation of Jesus, upon the cross: "My God, My God, why hast Thou forsaken me?" (Matt. 27:46), as the result of delirium, caused by extreme bodily suffering. They would tell us that Jesus was mistaken; that God had not forsaken Him. This interpretation will not satisfy the thought and reverent student, and he turns to find a more satisfactory explanation, which is not difficult. Paul testifies: "He hath made Him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in Him," II Cor. 5:21. At that very moment Jesus was truly made "sin," as He took the place of the guilty sinner, and stood between him and God. God could not countenance sin, as it rested upon His Son, any more than when it rested upon the guilty sinner; consequently He turned away His face and abandoned His own Son at that moment. Jesus knew what He was saying. Abandonment on the part of the Father was necessary to complete the condescension, and to make Him the perfect Savior of imperfect men.

The ever-increasing shame and sorrow which rests upon my heart is, that my *sin* necessitated this condescension; disrobed Jesus of His heavenly glories; caused Him to be thus humbled, and to be abandoned by man and God, that He might reach the plane upon which I stood, and make salvation possible. Tragedy indeed, the result of love!

The Abandoned Christ Exalting Others.

There are divine paradoxes in matters pertaining to salvation, which are not commonly understood. Paul evidently understood this spiritual reality when he said: "As unknown, and yet well known; as dying, and, behold, we

live; as chastened, and not killed; as sorrowful, yet always rejoicing; as poor, yet making many rich; as having nothing, and yet possessing all things," II Cor. 6:9, 10.

This fact was most perfectly demonstrated in the mission of Jesus. He came to exalt others, but the price of exalting others was His own humiliation and abandonment. The mocking priests, who reviled Him, while He was hanging upon the cross, by saying: "He saved others; Himself He cannot save," (Mark 15:31) expressed both a falsehood and a truth. He could have saved Himself, had he elected to do so. When Peter attempted to defend his Lord, with the sword, striking at a servant of the high priest and cutting off his ear, Jesus rebuked him saying: "Put up again thy sword into his place; * * * Thinkest thou that I cannot now pray to my Father, and He shall presently give me more than twelve legions of angels? Matt. 26:52, 53. He could have saved Himself, but so doing would have disqualified Him for the saving of others. Continuing, Jesus said to Peter: "But how then shall the scriptures be fulfilled, and thus it must be," Matt. 26:54. His own utter abandonment was the price of saving others; and this price He unhesitatingly and unflinchingly determined to pay.

The Bible abounds in deeds of mercy and heroism prompted by love; but, fascinating as they are, none of them approach the matchless love story of the cross. Let us cite several of them.

The love story of *rescue,* or of Abraham and Lot, is an interesting one. Abram was an uncle of Lot, and they pastured their herds together. One day the herdmen of Abraham and the herdmen of Lot had a quarrel, which, together with the shortage of pasture, seemed to necessitate a separation of the herds. Peaceful Abraham said to Lot: "Let there be no strife, I pray thee, between me and thee,

and between my herdmen and thy herdmen * * * If thou wilt take the left hand, then I will go to the right; or if you depart to the right hand, then I will go to the left," Gen. 13:8, 9. Then covetous Lot beheld all the plain of Jordan, that it was well watered, and chose for himself the richest pasture land, and journeyed eastward.

The sacred historian significantly states: "Abram dwelled in the land of Canaan, and Lot dwelled in the cities of the plain, and pitched his tent toward Sodom," Gen. 13:12. As a natural consequence of pitching his tent *toward* Sodom, which is typical of sin, Lot soon dwelt *in* Sodom. Before long the kings of the North drove their conquest down to Sodom, and carried away the inhabitants of Sodom, and their possessions; and with them Lot and his possessions were also taken. When the news was brought to Abram that Lot was carried away, he hastily mustered his servants, numbering three hundred and eighteen, into a small army, and at the risk of his own life and property, made a hurried march northward, out-generaling the triumphant army of the kings, and recovered Lot and his possessions, bringing him back with him. Here is a love story of rescue; but heroic and significant as it is when standing alone, when compared with the love story of the cross, it pales into the common place and insignificant.

There is another interesting story, which must have been prompted by love. It is a story of *intercession.*

Under the leadership of Moses, God had led the Israelites safely out of Egypt; having divided the Red Sea for their crossing, and having miraculously fought their battles and fed them. One would scarcely believe that they could ever forget God, but they did. God invited Moses to the top of the mountain, to receive the law and directions concerning worship, while Israel encamped at Sinai. Al-

though the stay was comparatively short, but forty days, Israel began to question God's dealings, declaring that they knew not what had become of this Moses, who had brought them out of the land of Egypt; and demanded of Aaron that he make them a God. Strange indeed, that a people who had so recently beheld the mighty and miraculous works of the true God, should, in so short a time, demand a god made by man. Foolish and unreasonable as was the request, it was acceded to, and Israel was in possession of a golden calf, before which they built an altar, and offered sacrifices, declaring it to be the God which brought them out of Egypt.

Israel's idolatry was such an insult against God, that He purposed not to forgive, and said unto Moses: "I have seen this people, and, behold, it is a stiffnecked people: Now therefore let me alone, that my wrath may wax hot against them, and that I may consume them; and I will make of thee a great nation," Ex. 32: 9, 10.

Here was an opportunity for self-promotion, resulting from a just cause. To be utterly destroyed was what Israel justly deserved. To become the head of a great nation, upon whom should be bestowed special blessings and favors, was in keeping with the worthiness and dignity of Moses. More than all else, God had taken the initiative, and declared His intention to bring it to pass. Will Moses acquiesce? After reminding God of His promise to Abram, Isaac and Jacob, and the awful consequences resulting from such a course, Moses went down unto the people; burned the golden calf, and ground it to powder, and having the ashes upon the water, compelled the Israelites to drink it. As in this case, the cup of sin when drank to its dregs is bitter. Calling upon Israel to declare personally for or against Jehovah, a distinct line was drawn, but the impenitents destroyed.

Again Moses interceded for those who had declared

their intentions of being reconciled to God and to serve Him, praying thus: "Oh, this people have sinned a great sin, and have made them gods of gold. Yet now, if thou wilt forgive their sins—; and if not, blot me, I pray thee, out of thy book which thou hast written," Ex. 32:31, 32. The Lord refused to grant the request of Moses, in blotting his name out of His book, and said. "Whosoever has sinned against me, him will I blot out of my book," Ex. 32:33. Nevertheless God heard the intercession of the man Moses, and consented that he might lead Israel on, toward the promised land. What an interesting story! What an unselfish prayer! A man who was innocent and worthy threw himself into the gap, stood between the guilty and unworthy and God and secured mercy for them. Interesting and important as is this story, we find it dependent entirely upon another, the love story of the cross. Without the latter, the former is an idle tale. The love story of the cross spells, a possible salvation for every ruined son of Adam's race, without which the intercession of Moses would have been ineffectual. No other story compares either in quality and quantity, with the love story of Calvary.

There is another little love story related by Jesus—the love story of *mercy*. The Samaritan found, by the way side, a man was a Jew and whose nation hated the Samaritans like dogs. This man was robbed, wounded, and helpless. A priest had seen him lying, but drew his skirts aside, and passed by him. A Levite had come that way, but, seeing him dying, passed on. Finally the Samaritan came along; put him upon his beast; brought him to an inn, and cared for him. Shall we idealize the Samaritan? Noble as was his conduct, he was but a dim reflection in parable, of the Christ who found rebellious, bleeding, dying man, and picked him up in mercy.

Collect all the stories of heroism, love, self-sacrifice, and add them together, and the sum total of them all will be small, in comparison to the love story of Calvary. This is why no name compares to His. The poet expressed it when he sang:

"Jesus, oh how sweet the name:
Jesus, every day the same.
Jesus, let all saints proclaim
His worthy praise, forever."

This name is the only one which moves the heart of God, and secures His mercy and favors for man.

Jesus came not only to give the world an ideal, although He was the world's perfect man. Too many there are who are exalting His Humanity at the expense of His deity, and are saying many things about the "idealism" of His life. If Jesus would have had no greater mission than to give the world an example, He might as well, and would have stayed in heaven; for man, fallen and unredeemed, could never have measured to such an example.

Christ came not to preach, only, although He was the world's greatest preacher. His sermons are held unquestionably and indisputably as the greatest sermons the world has ever heard. They afford us our most advanced studies in homiletics, as well as our most primary lessons. People literally hung upon His lips by the thousands, sometimes under most uncomfortable conditions and circumstances, to hear His words. Ministers, who have a holy ambition to become the greatest blessing they can, by the medium of the sermon, could do nothing better than to analyze these great sermons of Jesus, and seek to imitate Him. Though He was the world's greatest preacher, if He had had no higher mission than to preach, He would have remained in heaven.

Christ came not to teach, only, although He was the world's greatest teacher. He completely overturned some of the false philosophies of the world; and proclaimed a true philosophy, which has engaged the Websterian brains of the centuries. He was a profound teacher, who was never puzzled by the apparently unanswerable questions propounded by the most learned of His day. Yet, had there been no other mission for Jesus on earth than to teach, He would never have come.

Christ came not to heal, only, although He was the greatest physician the world ever knew. He never met an "incurable," although there were brought to Him the blind, the deaf, the leper, the palsied, even the very dead. A woman who had suffered twelve years, had spent all she had upon doctors, but grew worse, was healed by a single touch of Him. Upon certain occasions the streets were filled with those who came or were brought to Him for healing, and He healed them all. What a remarkable record of healing! A world breaking record, indeed! Yet, had Jesus no higher mission that to heal, great as that was, He would doubtless have stayed in heaven.

What then did Jesus come for? Listen to the archangel who announced His birth: "Thou shalt call His name Jesus, for He shall *save* His people from their sins," Matt. 1:21. Jesus also said: "The Son of Man is come to seek and to *save* that which was lost," Luke 19:10. Not to preach, only, though He did preach; not to teach, only, although He did teach; not to heal, only, although He did heal, but to *save,* Jesus came. Everything less than *saving* men was incidental or secondary in the program of the Christ. To save men caused Him to lay aside His heavenly robes, to come to earth, to live and die for men.

The Abandoned Christ Exalted

The humiliation, the abandonment, the exalting of others were necessary and successive steps in the final exaltation of the Christ. Not only is He exalted in the supplying of all that the souls of men need now, and that the soul will need forever; but He is exalted back to the right hand of the Father, to the position which He enjoyed before He entered upon His earthly mission. His glory is enriched, because of His earthly conquest. He stepped down upon the plane of fallen, lost humanity; linked himself arm in arm with man, and replaced himself with the reach of every lost son of Adam's race the possibility of being exalted to the plane of heaven. Adding to the adoration of angels and archangels, His praises will be augmented by the tens of thousands who will sing the song of redeeming love, around the dazzling throne of God.

Let us settle the all-important question: Will you and I be present? Will we mingle our praises with theirs? The angels will make just as sweet music upon their golden harps, if we do not listen to their heavenly strains. The redeemed will sing just as sweetly, if we do not join our voices; but we cannot afford not to be there. Every heart should be won by the love story of the cross, and prepare at once and fully, to share with Christ in the glory of His kingdom. Greater love hath no man than to lay down his life for his friends. Jesus gave His life for those who hated Him—a wretched, rebellious, lost humanity.

CHAPTER IV

THE PRICE OF DISCIPLESHIP.

"If any man come to me, and hate not his father, and mother, and wife, and children, and brethren, and sisters, yea, and his own life also, he cannot be my disciple. And whosoever doth not bear his cross, and come after me, cannot be my disciple." St. Luke 14:26, 27.

There were times in the ministry of Jesus when He was exceedingly popular, and there were also times when almost all men forsook Him. Once Jesus turned to His small company of wavering disciples and said: "Will ye go away also? The words of our exceedingly interesting text were spoken to the multitude which flocked around Him during a popular period of His Perean ministry. He had just healed the man who was dropsied, and who had been brought to Him on the Sabbath day while He was dining at the home of a chief Pharisee. Jesus, here, once and for all, stipulates the cost of true discipleship. It is ours to seek to understand the full meaning of His teaching, and to pay over the price which true discipleship demands.

A *disciple* is one who is taught—a learner. In another sense, a disciple is a follower. To be a true disciple constitutes one a christian in life and practice; having learned the teachings of the Master, and putting them into living, loving service.

True Discipleship Has a Value.

The very first thing with which we are impressed, is the fact that true discipleship has a *value.* It must have a discernable value of no small consideration, if we may judge

from the price stipulated in our text, and the boldness with which the stipulations are made. This will become more apparent as the items are examined.

In order to bring the value of discipleship before His hearers in concrete terms, Jesus compared it to a builded tower, and to a victorious conquest. No one would fail to be impressed with the accomplishment of a man who completed a mammoth tower, or as we would say, built a sky-scraper. The conquests of a victorious army go down upon the records of history and are never forgotten. As definite as the cost of a sky-scraper, and as epoch-making as the conquests of a victorious army, so is the value of true discipleship. Noting that Jesus brings the value of discipleship in comparison with these things, puts reality and interest into our subject.

True discipleship has two values—*timely* and *eternal.* Too long have we been thinking of the benefits which accrue from being christians, as being *eternal* only, and as belonging to the future. If no benefits other than those which are eternal were to be derived from following Jesus, these would be multiplied times sufficiently remunerative; but the disciple of Jesus begins to reap the good even in this life.

Belonging to the *timely* benefits, physical *blessings* are worthy of mention. Long life and many days are, in a special way, provided for the christian. The Decalogue contains the following combined interesting command and promise: "Honor thy father and thy mother; that thy days may be long upon the land which the Lord thy God giveth thee," Ex. 20:12. The Psalmist also declares by inspiration: "With long life will I satisfy him, and show him my salvation," Psalms 91:16. There are almost numerous passages which, directly or indirectly, teach that physical blessings belong to the catalogue of christian benefits. This is not to be construed as teachings that christians never become

sick or that when they do it is evidence that they have sinned, that God has promised special favors to such who honor Him. Thousands are dying every year, and filling premature graves, simply because they are not christians. The drunkard, the harlot, the tobacco fiend, the devotee of injurious fashion, and the drunkard with excessive pleasure and miserliness are all burning off both ends of the candle of life, simply because they are not christians. True discipleship saves from all these things, and is a tremendous physical asset.

Again, true discipleship has a distinct financial value. Many a man is poor today, simply because he is not a christian. The almshouses are filled with the paupers, and the highways are lined with the tramps and vagabonds, simply the results of not being christians.

Not long since, a soldier said to a comrade: "Look down my throat and tell me what you see." The speaker opened his mouth wide, while his comrade raised himself upon his toes and peered down his throat; and then declared that he saw nothing unusual. "You did not look carefully enough," insisted the first speaker; "look again." While he again opened his mouth, this time wider, the comrade, standing on tip-toe made a careful investigation of his throat, and again declared that he saw nothing but what could be seen in any throat. "That is certainly strange," said the soldier; "two fine, large farms have gone down there, and do you mean to tell me that you cannot see anything?" Many there are whose property has taken a similar route and is gone, leaving nothing good in exchange. This is all the result of not being christians.

It is a false notion that men must remain non-christian to become successful business men. "Success" which could not be attained, if one were a christian, is not success at all

in the true sense. Every dollar, gotten in a way that it could not have been gotten had the possessor been a true christian, will curse the individual. Many a man is being barred from becoming a disciple of Christ, and will be finally barred out of heaven, because of ill-gotten dollars which he is unwilling to surrender to their rightful owners.

True discipleship does not promise riches to men, but would save multitudes from poverty, and will give a good conscience to all who come into possession of it.

In its last analysis, the value of true discipleship cannot be measured by timely standards, such as health and money. It is infinitely greater, and can be measured only by eternal standards. All the temporal benefits accruing from it, in this life, are merely incidental. The larger value is the spiritual and eternal, beginning in the present, but increasing in preciousness throughout eternity.

True Discipleship Has a Place.

So long have we been singing: "I'm glad salvation is free," that I am fearful that we have lost sight of the fact that salvation costs anything at all. True, there is no price which can be paid down, which will *entitle* us to this coveted possession. While it is a fact that after we have counted out our all and placed it upon the altar, we are still hopelessly distant from purchasing salvation, it is nevertheless true that the Master demands our all; and when our little resources are exhausted He supplies what we lack. Our little all is so small, and the part which He necessarily supplies so great, that we lose complete sight of our small contribution, and recognize salvation as His gift to us. "By grace are ye saved through faith, and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God," Eph. 2:8.

TRUE DISCIPLESHIP HAS A STIPULATED PRICE.

John leaves no room for uncertainty as to the price of discipleship. The price is stated unmistakeably. Let us note the items.

In the words: "come after me," is found the primary condition of discipleship. This immediately raises a question of *where* or *destination.* Where has He gone, bidding us to "come after" Him? The preceding words: "bear his cross," help to explain this part of the stipulated price of discipleship. "Bearing his cross" has so many shades of interpretation that we pause here in our inquiry. Some profess to bear their "crosses" when they give a word of testimony, or sing, or pray. Some think they are bearing their "crosses" when they give a small portion of their means to support the church, or to carry the Gospel to the heathen. In fact, almost anything people do for the Lord these days is likely to be interpreted a "cross."

But Jesus meant something more than this. Though prophetically, He indicates that the "cross" is to condition our acceptance as His disciples, as truly as it is to qualify Him for the leading of such who would be disciples. A cross is an instrument for crucifixion; and to "bear the cross" means a willingness or a determination to be crucified —to have it (the cross) bear us. To Him the cross was a painful, physical reality; To us it is a vital, spiritual reality. By the cross He suffered the consequences of sin because of us: By the cross sin suffers the consequence of Him in us. In either case it is death. In His case it was death by sin: In our case it is death to sin.

Taking up and bearing the cross, then, with its results, represents all that is experiential or subjective in religion. It secures for the soul all that is included in atonement merit—regeneration, sanctification and glorification. As it

was by the way of the cross that He came to resurrection life; so it is by the way of the cross that we come to newness of spiritual life. As His path to glory led beyond His cross; even so our path to glory leads to and beyond the cross, on which we are crucified to sin, and the world.

The price of discipleship, in a practical way, is the *yielding up of friendship with the world.* "The servant is not greater than his Lord. If they have persecuted me, they will persecute you also. If the world hate you, ye know that it hated me before it hated you. If ye were of the world, the world would love his own; but because ye are not of the world, but I have chosen you out of the world, therefore the world hateth you" St. John 15:18, 20. Upon this particular aspect of discipleship we have the following admonition: "Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him. For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world," I John 2:15, 16.

In our text Jesus does not merely express this practical side of the cost of discipleship in general terms, but names specific items. The hating of father and mother, wife and children, brethren and sisters, even our own life, are items in the price of discipleship. People in His day, as well as today, had such unreal conceptions of spiritual things. They would leave one teacher to become the disciples of another upon slight pretexts. Many, today, profess to follow Jesus, who, because of some trifling opposition or difficulty, turn away. He who truly becomes a disciple of Jesus, having paid the price of discipleship, will not be so easily turned away again into the service of sin.

Now it is evident that Jesus did not mean to teach that we should *hate* in the sense in which we generally use the

term, but rather that natural relations should be placed second to our relation and devotion to Him. He would have our love for Him to be so great that our human love, compared to it, could be likened unto hate. The relation He would have us sustain to Him is one so strong, that all other relations would strain and break first. Our devotion to Him should be so sacred and sweet, that all others would be abandoned before Him.

It would be contrary to the teachings of Christ and the entire Bible to interpret this text, which is sometimes acknowledged to be difficult in interpretation, as encouraging indifference to parents or the needs of our families even in a small measure. Parents are to be obeyed; brothers and sisters esteemed; wives to be loved and cherished; children to be clothed and fed. These relations are clearly outlined, and duties enjoined in the Scriptures; but, above these relations and duties, so much exalted over them as to be almost incomparable, is our relationship to our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, and the duties which this relationship brings. Exalted as is this conception, it is the true relation of discipleship.

The right attitude to be assumed by the consecrated Christian, in relation to family ties, is beautifully illustrated by the following incident:

During the days of the terrible persecutions in the Netherlands by the Spaniards, a humble schoolmaster was put to the torture to compel him to renounce his faith. While on the rack the inquisitor said to him: "Do you love your wife and children? Won't you, for their sake, give up this religion of yours?" The poor old schoolmaster said: "If this earth were all gold, if all the stars were pearls and if that golden globe and those pearly stars were all mine, I would give them all up to have my children with me. I

would rather stay in this prison, and live on bread and water with my wife and children, than live like a king without them. But I will not for the sake of pearls or gold or wife or children give up my religion, for I love my God more than wife or child or gold or pearls." The torture went on until the man died in agony. He loved God with all his heart and soul and mind and strength.

In this day, when half-heartedness characterizes so much religious profession, this teaching should come to us with dynamic force. Comparatively few know anything about dying out to sin; and the day is here when separation from the world, its popular sins, its pleasures and its relationships is not demanded by most of the churches, nor expected of its members. Unless we are careful, even the natural relations which are legitimate and sacred may become a snare to such who seek to follow Jesus.

Non-payment of Price Results in Shame.

Failure to pay over the price of true discipleship exposes one to the mocking, scorn and ridicule of onlookers. This fact is again illustrated by the tower and campaign. In a certain conspicuous corner, a magnificent sky-scraper. The architectural designs were completed, and the newspapers devoted considerable space to giving the project publicity. The excavation was finished; the foundation completed, and the structural work begun. All at once the work was stopped and the building stood unfinished. People began to inquire into the cause, which later was disclosed. The man had failed to count the cost, and could not pay over the price. It became the talk of the town; people who passed by scorned, and the name of the man who had failed became a word of ridicule. So he who fails to pay over the price of true discipleship exposes himself to the ridicule and contempt of the passersby.

Only a few decades ago our country was rent in twain because of a disagreement in policies to be pursued, with the Mason and Dixon line as the division—the North and South lined up one against the other—the boys in gray against the boys in blue. Many hard battles were fought, and many lives sacrificed, while the battle-fields were drenched with blood. Gradually the South lost out, and finally the North won in the long and fierce struggle. The Confederacy which had been organized ceased to exist, and again the stars and stripes floated in the Southern breeze. Heroic as they fought, the South was defeated, and the pages of history preserve the records of defeat. They had not counted the cost sufficiently, and were unable to pay the price; consequently went down in shame and disgrace. Even so, he who fails to pay over the price of discipleship goes down in eternal defeat, and the records of the skies preserve the sad story.

Discipleship Cheap at Any Price.

Although the stipulated price of discipleship is great, the results of such relation are of such a nature that no price too great can be named. In other words, it is cheap at any cost. The dying millionaire would gladly have paid over all he possessed for the results of discipleship: but the price is not all one has, but all he *is* plus all he *has*. Salvation is not a mere luxury, but a necessity in the dying hour and in the day of judgment. To have it *then* we must secure it *now*. To secure it now the price must be fully paid.

He who comprehends the true value of discipleship is a keen discerner of values, and a shrewd bargainer. An Astor may predict future land values, and secure promising tracts for his estate. A Rockefeller may locate oil fields, and secure options upon them, and become the richest man in the world. A Morgan may manipulate stocks and bonds, and

hold the control of the country's industry in his hand: A McKenzie may connect steamship lines, and thus secure a monopoly on navigation. These men are called "captains of industry," and are considered shrewd bargainers. The man or woman who recognizes the spiritual value of discipleship, and secures it at any price, is beyond all comparison with these. Great as is the cost, the poorest man who lives has the price at his command. He who gives his own *little* and secures God's *all* has made a great bargain. Who would not pay the price?

CHAPTER V

THE TRIUMPH OF FAITH

"This is the victory that overcometh the world, our faith." I John 5:4.

The subject of faith is an inexhaustible one, and one which is perhaps more frequently treated from the pulpit than any other. Regardless of this fact, there is no danger of the subject being exhausted upon any occasion.

So many people have such a dim, unreal, visionary, dreamy, conception of faith. To them faith has no reality or tangibility. To such, faith needs a new definition. The best scriptural definition of faith is found in Hebrews, the eleventh chapter and first verse, and reads as follows: "Faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen." Here faith is declared to be *substance* not shadow, evidence which witness to the thing which has been seen and heard, instead of *hearsay* which knows nothing in reality.

Some time ago I received a new conception of faith. It came about in this way:

I was reading from the book of Genesis in the original Hebrew and came to the verse (Gen. 15:6) which says: "Abram believed in God, and it was accounted to him for righteousness." Upon investigating I found the Hebrew word which we translate "believe" literally meant to *lean on.* I then translated my text as follows: "Abram leaned upon God, and it was accounted to him for righteousness." Delighted with this discovery concerning faith, I lay my microscope (a figure of speech) a little more carefully over the word and found that the word not only meant to *lean on*

but *to lean hard on.* I then translated my text and it read as follows: "Abram leaned hard upon God, and it was accounted to him for righteousness." This translation seemed so full of reality and meaning that the testimony of the lexicon (Hebrew dictionary) was not fully trusted, but I made haste to announce my discovery to my professor of Hebrew. After he had carefully looked into the word, he declared that my translation was literal and correct, and my joy was complete. Ever since faith has had more reality: it means to *lean hard* upon God.

To lean hard upon God requires at least three things:

A personal acquaintance with God is necessary, for it is impossible to place such confidence in one with whom there is no acquaintance.

There must be implicit confidence in His ability to protect, to lead and to provide, or there could be no comfort of assurance.

There must be perfect trust in the truthfulness of His words, and His highest interest in us, without which even His *ability* would not avail us anything.

A PRE-REQUISITE TO TRIUMPH

My theme is not *faith* only but the *triumph of faith.* A pre-requisite to the triumph of faith is trial, warfare, difficulty and hard labour. Some one is ready to ask: "Are these all found in Christian service?" James speaks of the "trying of your faith." Faith, then, like all other things which are on probation, must be tested, tried and then triumphed.

At this point we should be very careful that we are properly understood, lest some one should receive the impression that the life of the Christian is a hard one—hard because he is a Christian. This is not true despite the fact

that he must be tested and tried. The Christian is the only person who is truly happy. It was the wise man who said: "the way of transgressors is hard" and many a transgressor has proven the reality of this declaration since it was uttered.

Some time ago I came into correspondence with a number of inmates of the Ohio Penitentiary. Among these was a young man who had tried the way of the transgressor and knew whereof he wrote. Among other things which his letter said, was this: "I am yet a young man, but I have seen some of the seamy sides of life, and I know by experience that the way of the transgressor is hard." This is only one of the hundreds of thousands of cases, whose testimony would be the same if they would speak honestly. The Bible teaches that the transgressor's life is a hard one, and now comes a message from behind cold prison bars declaring the same to be true—that experience has proven it.

Every invention, every discovery is submitted to a rigid test before it can be declared a success and triumphed. That which cannot stand the test must go down as failure, and many failures there have been indeed.

The secret of life is one which man has been seeking to discover for a long time, but one which God seems to have hidden away safely for His own counsels, so that man cannot find it. Some years ago an infidel scientist thought that he had discovered the secret of life, having found a substance which under certain chemical processes was thought to manifest signs of spontaneity. The discovery was announced to the world. Immediately, students of science began to apply the test to the announced discovery, finding that the substance was nothing more than a deep sea deposit called sea ooze, which contained nothing approaching spontaneous life. "Tested and failed" was the verdict. The name of the

would-be scientist is ever associated with failure, and spontaneous generation is looked upon as a huge joke.

An illustration of an invention tested and tried can be found in the recently invented aeroplane or flying machine. Had some one ventured, only a few years ago, a prophecy that by this time a machine would have been invented which could overcome gravitation, carry its own weight and that of a passenger, remain in the air an indefinite period of time and travel at the rate of a hundred miles an hour, he would have been looked upon as a dreamer: but the fact is recognized the world over.

For years two young men, unknown to the world, had worked hard, under difficulties which seemed insurmountable. The heavy financial outlay in experimenting, as well as the humble circumstances of these two men, required that they continue in their occupation as builders and repairers of bicycles, so as to make the experimenting which they were carrying on, between times, possible. One day the world was startled by a report that Orville Wright had flown, in his machine, a distance of more than twenty miles, and the next day his brother, Wilbur, had flown a little farther. Immediately the whole world became their audience of spectators. But the test had to be applied. The U. S. Government outlined the test, indicating how long the machine should stay in the air, how heavy should be its burden, and at what speed it must fly. The test was applied and the conditions were fully met. These men were rewarded by the government; they were visited by representatives from Europe; invited to be the guests of kings and rulers; and universities and societies vied with each other in conferring upon them degrees and honors. They have become financially rich, as is evidenced by the fact that at the death of Wilbur, in the summer of 1912, he was found to have accumulated, in those

few, short years, over a quarter of a million of dollars. Today the names of Wilbur and Orville Wright are known the world over, as the result of an invention tested and triumphed.

The testing of faith can scarcely be compared with even such a successful invention. James declares the trying of our faith to be more precious than gold. The testing of faith is more precious than gold because it produces Christian character which cannot be purchased with gold.

Genuine Christian character cannot be too highly valued, because it is necessary for our eternal happiness, as well as for successful Christian service, in an unfriendly and sinful world. It is very doubtful whether God ever takes any one to heaven who does not have Christian character to enable him to stand the test in this world.

There is a certain locality in which there is an *occasional* revival. During revival time the tide rises very high and great is the demonstration. The winter's snow has scarcely all disappeared from the roadsides until the revival tide has begun to ebb, and, before the summer is over, very little can be found of the winter's revival. Some one remarked to me: "If God ever gets those people to heaven, he will have to take them on surprise just at the close of a revival." Do you think God hurries people off to heaven, on surprise, who could not stand the test of a single summer? Such chances of heaven seem small indeed. Tested Christian character is necessary to get us ready for action.

The brightest lights in Sacred history became such as a result of rigid testing. Abram walked out by simple faith, and despite the seemingly impossible, became the father of the faithful. Moses was sent to the back side of the mountain to feed sheep forty years, and God having schooled him in hardship, he became the world's greatest law-giver. Jo-

seph found his path to the throne to lead through the dungeon, and Daniel reached his power by the way of the lions' den. Job the world example of tested faith, became the priest who officiated at the altar when Eliphaz, Bildad, and Zophar were re-instated into favor with God, only after he, himself, had undergone extreme testing.

The sweetest and tenderest Christians the world ever knew were rendered such by the crushing of trial. There is something in human nature which needs crushing, and human nature, like the flower, only yields its richest fragrance and sweetest perfume when crushed. It is also when under the crushing of trial that Jesus becomes more divinely precious and real. It is then that "the form of the fourth" appears. Madam Guyon said, that when confined in prison, the stones of her prison cell sparkled like diamonds. It was because of the nearness of the Lord, in the time of extreme trial.

FAITH THE TRIUMPHANT NOTE IN ALL THE SCIENCE AND PHILOSOPHY.

There is a wonderful verse of scripture which indicates the relation of *faith* to true science and philosophy. It reads as follows: "By faith we understand that the worlds have been framed by the word of God, so that what is seen hath not been made out of things which appear." Heb. 11:3. A. V.

The greatest scientific problem with which man ever grappled is the problem of creation. Various theories have been advanced. Along comes the infidel scientist, who declares that he knows how the world came into existence. "It," says he "came into existence by a fortuitous concourse of atoms." This is high sounding phraseology which means that atoms came together merely by chance or accident and that this accounts for the existence of the world. This wise

scientist has forgotten that no one as yet is able to tell what an atom is and if he would define an atom and these atoms possibly came together by chance there still remains one unanswered question which is: who made the atom? It is not mine to put a premium on ignorance but one may know but little grammer have a small knowledge of mathematics know no Latin nor Greek, but if he has *faith* in God, he knows more in a minute about the creation than all the combined infidel scientists of five hundred years have ever known.

This professedly wise scientist reminds one of the infidel astronomer who said that he did not believe that there was a God for he had swept the heavens many a time with his telescope and never saw him and the doctor who said that he did not believe that man had a soul for he had helped to dissect a number of bodies and never saw one.

Sir Isaac Newton the greatest astronomer of his day and one of the greatest students of natural philosophy is accredited of having said, that he could learn more astronomy by reading his Bible an hour than by watching all night in his observatory. This is only another way of saying that faith is the triumphant note in true science and philosophy. Dr. Wolfkin, in a recent address before a State Sunday School Convention, uttered the same truth, when he said: "There is more in religion than that which comes by the way of the head."

THE HEROISM OF FAITH.

Compared to the bravery of patriotism, faith has made a splendid record. The crimson stream of martyrs blood began to flow just outside of Eden's Gate, and has been flowing through all ages until the present time. A sample of recent and almost continuous martyrdom is found in the helpless Armenians who have been so often hackled down

and massacred by the cruel Turk. From a nation which once numbered about thirty-five millions, they have been reduced to about three and a half million and of these the large number are women and orphans. So far as the map is concerned the Armenians do not exist at all, having been swallowed up by Asiatic Turkey. The reason for the cruelty which the Armenians have received at the hand of the Turks, is that they would not renounce the Christian religion for that of Mohammed. This is a splendid testimony to the heroism of faith.

A soldier of the Civil War who witnessed much danger and who himself had some narrow escapes from death, says that he never saw a time when a call was made for volunteers to do a dangerous piece of work when there were not three or four times as many volunteers as were needed to do the work. Why was this? We may charge these volunteers as vainly seeking an opportunity to write their names on the pages of history by doing a daring deed, or credit them with a love of country, but it is evident that the bravery of these men is not to be compared to the heroes of faith, who have daily hazarded their lives for the cause of Christ, living continuously a martyr's life, and finally yielding up their lives joyously as martyrs of the Christian faith.

Not long since, there was placed into my hand an old war bugle, which was, to me, an interesting object. Upon examining it, looking into it from the funnel end, it was observed that there were rust spots, of a reddish nature, which were sprinkled more closely together toward the smaller part of the horn. The person who had placed the bugle into my hand told the story. The trumpeter had been wounded in battle, but with blood oozing from his nostrils, he continued to blow the trumpet until, with his last breath, he sprinkled his life's blood upon the horn of the bugle, which

had not been wiped away, but which became spots of rust. As I saw these rust spots of blood and heard the story a thrill went through my entire being. Surely, said I to myself, if patriotism or love of country will move men to such deeds of chivalry, what will the heroism of faith do?

The list of faith martyrs is the answer to the question. All down the ages heroes of faith have bravely fought "the fight of faith," and, despite the inexpressible tortures and suffering to which some have been exposed, even to the lion's den and the stake, they have cheerfully suffered and died for Jesus' sake. Though time and space would not permit the writer of the book of Hebrews to name all of them, the catalogue is sufficiently complete with representative classes of martyrs to demonstrate the result of the heroism of faith. Prophets, apostles, early Christians, Armenians, have all been examples.

THE FINAL TRIUMPH.

Faith is that which links man on to God. It raises him to the highest possible pinnacle, where God reaches down, takes him by the arm, and exalts him to heaven.

The last enemy which is to be destroyed is death. Great as is this monster, and as much to be dreaded as is the grave, a man of faith in the person of the apostle Paul practically stood at the head of his own open grave and exultingly exclaimed: "O death, where is thy sting? O grave where is thy victory? The sting of death is sin, and a living faith in Christ is that which removes sin, and by so doing removes the sting of death.

In the Garden of The Gods there are three pinnacles of rocks, arising in one solid base for thirty or forty feet, and then dividing into three distinct pinnacles, one arising above the other. They have been appropriately named the

three graces—faith, hope and charity. Charity or love is the highest, reaching nearest the heavens, while faith is the lowest, remaining nearest the earth. In the Garden of God, the heart, love is declared to be the greatest of Christian graces and is truly so, for it never ceases, but is the law which governs the eternal world. It determines the conduct of angelic beings and redeemed men, and is the predominant attitude of God in his dealings with men. Faith will sometime be promoted because it will have finished its work of linking man on to God, earth to heaven; and when it shall have completed its important task, have kept its sacred trust, and have finished its problem, it will give place to sight, and lose itself in the eternal law of love, of which both faith and hope are but probationary parts. Hope is love desiring. Faith is love confident.

CHAPTER VI

THE TRUE DIGNITY AND VALUE OF MAN

"What is man?" Psalm 8:4.

The question involved in our theme is one as old as the race, and has no doubt been asked by every successive generation until this time. Possibly many times after the first man had been driven from his Eden Paradise, while wiping the sweat drops from his brow, he muttered to himself, "what is man?"

Although the subject of Anthropology, the study of man, has constituted a very large part of the curriculum in the school of the ages, yet, as a problem, it is not solved for all time; and with the discovery of successive years, larger fields are seen stretching before the present day student.

It is not mine to be so presumptuous as to pretend to offer any final solution to the problem, but since it is true that, in a sense, man is still his own greatest stranger, the old Greek proverb: "know thyself" is as appropriate as ever, and the subject is timely, interesting and perfectly legitimate for our consideration.

I. MAN'S INSIGNIFICANCE.

The study of a subject which carries us into such dizzy heights and fruitful fields can very profitably be prefaced by a little view of man's insignificance.

An individual is but one of a billion and a half who inhabit the earth on which we live. When our great world is taken into account, with its long stretches of land, and great oceans of water, its high mountains and deep cut valleys, its dense forests, fertile prairies and sandy deserts, one begins to feel as he gazes at this wonderful creation that he is indeed but a speck. But then he remembers that the earth

upon which we live and which has appeared so wonderful is but one of the smallest of the planets which constitute the Solar System, which revolves around the sun as its center, and that the sun itself is one billion three hundred times larger than the earth and six hundred times larger than all of the planets of The Solar System combined. Then again we are reminded that The Solar System is but one of the many systems which revolve around another great center and which go together to make up the Universe, which God has created by His power and governs by His own will. About the time that we have proceeded thus far in our comparison, man who appeared but a speck, sinks out of sight in insignificance.

II. MAN'S SIGNIFICANCE.

If some person could give a perfectly satisfactory definition of man, the question asked in our text would be answered. But since there are aspects of man which are profoundly mysterious, it is easier to describe than to define.

Waving the question long debated whether man is a trichotomy or a dichotomy, it will be sufficient to say that man is a compound. He is both natural and super-natural. He is in nature and partakes of nature, but he is also above nature and partakes of the super-natural. Prof. Drury says that man is built on a two-story plan. The lower is in nature, but the upper is reared into the super-natural. Dr. Harris in drawing the line between the natural and super-natural, in the universe, draws it directly across man, leaving man's physical in the natural but placing man, in the truest sense, in the realm of the super-natural.

1. NATURAL MAN.

(1) Confining ourselves for a few moments to natural of physical man, we are surprised and delightful with the

marvelousness and complexity of the body. In its construction it is composed of many parts, some of them intricate and delicate but each one subservient to its own ends and answering to its own purposes. Though man is an organism rather than a mechanism, there are many parts of the body performing functions which no mechanism has ever been able to approach. The invention of the camera is an imitation of a principle involved in the organ of sight. Man seeks to imitate God, and perhaps the greatest secrets of the universe lie concealed in man.

How man can take into his body, food, and from it is formed bone and muscle, tissue and fibre, hair and nails and the various substances of which the body is composed, is a secret which none know. The very fact of human life is such a mystery that the wisest philosopher who ever lived could not give a satisfactory definition of it. Sometimes words are thrown together as a definition of life, but in such instances, the words of phrases are about as mysterious as life itself. No wonder then that one so pious and scholarly as the Psalmist of old should exclaim: "I am fearfully and wonderfully made." Psalms 139:14.

(2) The body does not only possess value and dignity because of itself, but takes on these, in a larger measure, because of the fact that it serves as a house in which a celestial inhabitant resides, just as a house takes on interest and dignity because of a distinguished occupant.

Some time ago, while passing along a wealthy avenue in the very beautiful city of Detroit, my attention was called to a certain house which was said to be the residence of Governor B————. At once recalling that Detroit was not the Capitol of the State, I said: "Does the Governor reside here?" Oh no,, was the answer: Mr. B———— was formerly Governor of Mich., but he is now dead. While he was

living he resided in that house. While the former Governor was no longer Governor, and was even now dead, there was still an interest and dignity attached to that house, because the Governor had once occupied it.

If one visits Old Mount Vernon, on the Potomac, he will see the house in which George and Martha Washington once lived. In the library will be seen the various furnishings as the great General and First President of the U. S. left them, and in the bedroom are the identical pieces of furniture as Mrs. Washington was accustomed to arrange them with her own hands. Watchmen sacredly guard the spot so that not a single thing may be disturbed. The place has a dignity and value in the hearts of the American People, not to be estimated in financial terms, because of its former occupant.

A few years ago, while in the City of Indianapolis, a freight train passed through the city which drew a larger crowd than perhaps any freight train before or since. It was because it carried the timbers which once formed the little cabin in which Abraham Lincoln was born. Soldiers guarded it as a miser guards his gold for fear some one might, by the use of his pen knife, secure a tiny relic from those sacred timbers. So the value and dignity attached to that house.

If one visits the little village of Bethlehem, about six miles south of Jerusalem, he will be shown the very place where the Savior is said to have been born. Over the spot has been built the Church of the Nativity. Descending the winding stairs, the visitor is soon at the professed manger cradle. Though the identity of the place may be questioned, it illustrates the fact that a place or a house takes on interest and dignity according to its occupant.

(3) In view of the fact that the body is the house in

which an immortal occupant resides, it ought to be guarded with great sacredness. It is also dignified by the fact that, when the Holy Spirit comes into the life, the body becomes the temple in which he resides. When these things dawned on my own soul, I could not refrain from exclaiming: "Oh that we might estimate properly the sacredness and value of the body."

Any abuse of the body which impairs its usefulness and makes it prematurely unfitted for occupancy is a sin against self, against society and against God, who designed man. Whether this sin is committed by the miser in his greed for gold, the debauchee who satisfies his or her depraved appetites in the saloon and brothel, the young man driving nails into his own casket, by the use of the cigarette and tobacco, or the society lassie conforming to the latest but unbecoming and injurious fashions, it is just the same, and inexcusable.

2. THE SUPER-NATURAL MAN.

Did you see the potter as he placed the lump of clay on the wheel, turning it and shaping it until he had formed it into a beautiful vessel? For God to take a handful of dust and shape it into a beautiful house, such as man's body is in its normal condition, though great in itself, was by no means the greatest thing which he did in creation. It was not the building of the house, but the breathing into existence of the immortal occupant which constituted the crowning glory and master-piece of His creative work.

When God desired light to be, he simply spake the word and light appeared. When in his plan he purposed that the waters should be collected together, he simply spake the word and the great seas were scooped out. When creation was ready for plant and animal life, in their order, he simply spake the word and they sprang forth. But when many was

to be brought upon the scene, the very Cabinet of Heaven was assembled in council, and God said. "Let us make man in our image," and man was made in the image of God. Now this image did not consist in physical form or feature, but it was the supernatural man which was made to bear the Divine Likeness. This image was two-fold. It was a natural image and a moral image.

(1) *The Natural Image.*

When the term natural is used, in this connection, it must be understood that it is used in a different sense than it was in the former instance, when used to represent the physical man. By the natural image is meant the marks of personality or functions of the soul, which are usually given as intellect, sensibility and will—the power of knowing, the power of feeling, and the power of choosing.

This natural image man still bears. Saved or unsaved, whether in heaven or earth or hell, this natural image of God which was stamped upon man in creation is eternally his, at least in a measure; and as long as man continues to be man he must bear this impress, for this is what constitutes him man. If, like Lazarus, he is carried by angels to Abraham's bosom, he retains this image, or if, like Dives, he opens his eyes in Hell, these powers of the soul are present, for he remembered his brethren, he felt a deep regret for their impenitence and willed to petition that Lazarus might be sent to preach to them the gospel.

While nothing which has occurred to man has been able to erase this image which constituted him man, it must be conceded that the calamity of the fall has had an effect upon even this natural image which God stamped upon man, of himself. In other words, man is not what he was or would have been if sin had not touched him, and in a certain way real sense, it is true that "Aristotle was but a relic of Adam."

Not that Adam was necessarily created with these soul powers developed to the highest degree, but being in the image of God, he must have been in possession of possibilities that now lie far beyond the limits of the race. Had not such a calamity befallen him, there would doubtless have been a rapid and unhindered development, such as is scarcely dreamed of today. Had not such a fearful catastrophe came upon him, making him less than he was designed to be, it would not have taken the lord of creation, which indeed man was made, six thousand or more years to bridle a provided force in nature which we know as electricity, and appropriate it to his uses. Had man not become stupid, and in a large measure, dull to his surroundings, it would scarcely have taken him so long to discover that the earth upon which he lived was not a flat surface but a globe. The philosophy which simply dawned upon Aristotle, might have belonged to his primary lessons.

(2) *The Moral Image.*

Important as may be the natural image which God stamped upon man, it is not to be exalted above the moral image. This image consisted in the holiness or ethical character of God which he stamped upon His highest creature—man.

This feature of man stands out with supreme importance because upon it his well being depends. His *being* is independent of this, but not his *well-being.* This holiness, though not absolute but relative, must have partaken somewhat of the nature of God's holiness, because it was the result of his own impartation or breathing.

It must have been while in contemplation of the supernatural or the immortal man, that the Psalmist by inspiration said, according to our own version: "Thou hast made him a little lower than the angels," Psalm 8:5, but which

correctly translated from the Hebrew almost startlingly reads: "Thou hast made him to lack but little from God." In my judgment, this is the loftiest conception of man, as well as the sublimest statement concerning him to be found anywhere. This text combined with the one above quoted: "God created man in his own image," does not appear to bear any relation to the much-paraded doctrine of evolution. If the Bible is true, which we are willing to believe unhesitatingly, for upon its truthfulness hinges all our hope, these texts, in connection with the many of like nature, are sufficient to drive this miserable doctrine off the field. To profess to believe that God made man in his own image and to lack but little from Him, and then to argue that that image consisted in nothing more than an animal, of which the most perfect existing today, which is said to be man, has been produced by a long continued process of development, having ascended by evolution to many higher degrees of intelligence, is to reduce our conceptions of God to the plane of the animal, which would make him no-God. It would certainly be a burlesque upon the Infinite Himself.

This moral image or holiness which was given to man, which was but a transcript of God's own nature, has, by sin, been almost or completely erased, so that at least God's true character can no longer be read upon the heart of man, unregenerated. This was the first copy that God had ever written of his own nature, and when, by sin, this copy was erased, man was in a pitiable condition, scarcely knowing his own state. He had no standard by which he could measure himself, morally, having severed his relationship from God.

It was an act so merciful that we are inclined to feel, in our weakness, that the very resources of Heaven must have been well nigh taxed, when, in the Cabinet of the Skies, the great plan of human redemption was arranged. This again

bespeaks countless volumes for the dignity and value of man. Possibly The Creator could have seen any other part of His creation go down, but the master-piece, the crowning glory, His town likeness must be redeemed. It was then in wisdom that God descended to Mount Sinai, and with His own hand, engraved a second copy of his own nature on cold tables of stone, giving to man an objective standard for measuring himself, showing him what he ought to be, but what he was not. This is what Paul declared the law to be, a school master or a child-leader to bring men to Christ. Gal. 3:24. Again, the same great exponent of truth declared the law to be for the purpose, that "every mouth may be stopped and all the world become guilty before God." Rom. 3:19. Hence the law reveals to man what he ought to be, but what he is not. Grace reveals the possibility of being in Christ, what God has purposed him to be; and when allowed to operate upon man, grace re-chisels upon the soul that moral likeness which has been erased by sin; and when grace has completed its work, man will again reflect the moral image of God, just as minutely and perfectly as he did when he first came from his creative hand. "Where sin abounded grace did much more abound." When the stipulated purposes of the atonement are appropriated to man's need, even here in this present life, man may again bear the moral image of his Maker. Man was once His created image, now His redeemed likeness.

Oh what a value and dignity man possesses when viewed in the light of truth and Eternity! Who can calculate it? No wonder Jesus propounded the problem in Profit and Loss and asked, "What is a man profited, if he gain the whole world and lose his own soul?" Matt. 16:26. Well did he understand that all the gold and silver in the coffers of the world were not sufficient for an exchange for a single soul.

Since man's well being depends upon his spiritual relation to God, how significantly did Jesus say: "But seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness" Matt. 6:33. Not first simply in point of time, but also in that of importance.

But alas, how many are placing too low an estimate on themselves, being absorbed in timely pursuits, with no time for eternal interests! Men are busily engaged building houses here, but sending up no material for a Heavenly Mansion; laying up treasures here, where there is no possible safety, but placing no wealth beyond the reach of rust and robbers; having placed to their credit a bank account upon earth, but providing no resource in the land to which they hope some day to go. Men and women, almost worse than Judas who sold his Lord for thirty pieces of silver, about fifteen or sixteen dollar's value in our currency, are selling their Lord for a bubble of pleasure, a straw of honor or a fading flower of applause.

"Man know thyself" comes back to us again. Proud, humble, high or low, behold thy insignificance and sink out of sight. Raise thy head, behold thy dignity and value and arise to a proper estimate of thyself. It is in the scale of timely values where man sometimes places too great a dignity upon himself. When weighing in the balances of eternal values, no man has ever yet placed too high an estimate upon himself.

Let me close by repeating the immortal lines of America's greatest poet:

"Life is real, life is earnest,
And the grave is not its goal.
Dust thou art, to dust returnest,
Was not spoken of the soul."

CHAPTER VII

THE CHRISTIAN RACE

"Wherefore seeing we also are compassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset us, and let us run with patience the race which is set before us, looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith," Heb. 12:1-2.

The Great Master-teacher, Jesus Christ, frequently resorted to parables and figures to convey to the minds of his hearers the truth which He spoke. In this way He used the familiar, the commonplace, the well-understood, natural things to illustrate the profound and deeply mysterious things. The writer of the Epistle to The Hebrews imitated this Great Teacher, when he employed the figure of the race, to illustrate the Christian life.

The race to which he referred, in illustrating the Christian life, was, no doubt, the one in connection with the Olympic games. These were held every quadrennium, in the valley of Olympia, in Greece, dating back seven or eight centuries before Christ. These games attracted world-wide attention, and a reference to them would be readily understood.

I. The Christian Life a Race.

The Christian life is like a race, because there are prizes to be won. He who won the Olympic race received a prize. Sometimes a statue was erected in his honor. At other times the victor was exempted from taxes, had the day named in his honor, or was accorded a place of honor at public feasts. Sometimes the prize was simply to be crowned with a garland of olive twigs. The christian race is to be rewarded,

but with prizes besides which those offered to Olympic contestants would appear insignificant and unworthy.

A Double Prize.

It would be impossible to over-value the prize which the christian life offers. Too frequently we confine our thinking upon the subject of the benefit of the christian life, to the *future,* and forget that there are prizes to be won by the christian, in this life. While it is true that the christian's greatest prize is to be received at the end of his course, there are rewards which he who serves God receives already in this life.

See that man who wanders from door to door, aimless, homeless and an outcast to society. No one loves him; no one cares for him. He could pass out of the world without anyone seriously missing him. This is a picture of the loss of social blessings. Witness that empty cupboard, fuelless fireplace, broken window pane, rags and distress. This is a picture of the loss of legitimate prosperity and financial blessings. Note that once-promising, pure and innocent maiden, who languishes upon her bed, while a foul disease consumes her life; that once-manly lad, who now with pale face and bony, nervous form continues to draw away at the cigarette, which holds him as its helpless victim; that men who being held to his bed amidst anguish indescribable, fights snakes and horrid monsters. This is a picture of the absence of physical blessings. What is the solution to the problem of this social, physical and financial misery? It is all the result of one fact, and that fact is *sin.* Could we exchange the fact of sin, which is the soul cause of these dark and heart-sickening pictures, for the christian life, they would be entirely different. Many a man is friendless and homeless, simply because he is not saved. Great is the poverty,

wretchedness and misery, because their subjects are not Christians. Many have gone and are going to premature graves because of a lack of salvation. According, then, to a process of true and logical reasoning, prizes in the forms of social, financial and physical blessings are to be obtained as a result of the christian life.

But these prizes, enviable as they are, do not complete man's happiness, and are not the sum of man's highest good. They are not to be reckoned as ends in themselves, but merely as prizes which are to be obtained by the Christian, incidentally. Neither are these a guarantee of righteous character, for there are many who possess them, and are not Christian at all. There is a prize which the Christian obtains, which begins in this life, which brings to him spiritual blessings of incalculable value, such as peace, joy and soul rest, and which reaches out through all eternity, without which he is poverty-stricken after all. It is the prize of everlasting life. It is begun in the heart of him who surrenders to God, and who by a living faith, appropriates the merits of the atoning to his heart, but is crowned at the great day of final reckoning James says: "Blessed is the man that endureth temptation: for when he is tried, he shall receive the crown of life, which the Lord has promised to them that love Him," Jas. 1:12. Peter says: "And when the chief Shepherd shall appear, ye shall receive a crown of glory that fadeth not away," I Peter 5:4. Unto some who were about to be severely tried, John was commanded to write. "Be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life," Rev. 2:10. Paul bore witness to this fact, when almost withinsight of Nero's beheading block he sent back to the world this soul-inspiring testimony: "I am now ready to be offered, and the time of my departure is at hand. I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have

kept the faith. Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord the righteous judge, shall give me at that day: and not to me only, but unto all them also that love His appearing," II Tim. 4:6-8.

When compared with the prize of everlasting life, the sum of all the prizes won by contestants in the arenas of the world, shrink, as if by magic, into vague unrealities. If he who runs in an earthly race should run well, he who runs in the heavenly race a thousand-fold more.

A Call for Intense Activity.

When compared to a race, the christian life is seen to become a manly affair. Only the most splendid specimens of physical manhood could entertain a faint hope of carrying away one of the Olympic prizes. There are too many who look upon the christian religion as being adapted merely to children and women. Some appear to think that they possess too much brain and brawn to find adequate employment in the Christian life. Because of this false conception of the Christian religion many do not enlist, and many who do so half-heartedly make certain failures.

The Christian race calls for the best and all there is in any man. The spirit of this wicked age is against him who starts to run for Christ. The devil hinders; the worldly-minded pull at his garments, and false friends call to him to stop. He who would win, must, like Bunyan's Christian, stop his fingers in his ears and run, crying: "Life! life! eternal life!"

God has always found enough to engage the brainiest heads and brawniest arms, which He has been able to secure in complete consecration. Perhaps the greatest man who lived since Christ was Paul. He was not only made "the

apostle to the Gentiles," but is recognized universally as a past-master in philosophy, and the greatest theologian the world ever knew. His well-trained, consecrated, giant intellect was used in shaping New Testament theology more than all other New Testament writers combined.

There remain yet enough great problems to be solved, to offer usefulness to the brightest minds. There is yet enough missionary labor unfinished, to afford plenty of manliest effort for the strongest physical manhood. Whether great or small, weak or strong, there is a place for us in the christian race. God is able to make us all strong in His might, if we trust and obey Him. What He wants is all there is of us, and He will supply the shortage. Whoever we may be, for us to succeed in the christian life requires the employment of every power of our beings, the best and all there is of us.

Brings within View of Multitudes.

He who engaged in the Olympic race was made a public spectacle, for these games were attended by many thousands. Overlooking the stadium was a large amphitheater which would accommodate tens of thousands. Back of the amphitheater was Mt. Hymettus, which overlooked the valley of Olympia, from whose sloping sides many thousands frequently watched the contests. The religion of Jesus Christ is again likened to a race, because it brings its subjects within the arena of the view of multitudes. Persons who live practically unnoticed, and in whom communities have little interest, begin to attract attention when they accept Christ and publicly profess Him. Revival meetings attract the attention of the multitudes, and men and women from all walks and stations of life come to witness those who take their initial steps in the start of the christian race. Some-

times onlookers are not very charitable, and prophesy that certain ones who start in the christian race will not hold out. Some one may be tempted to say, that if being a Christian will expose him to the gaze of multitudes, he will make no effort at all. We will return to this point later, but let us now be conceded, that the fact that multitudes watch those who run the christian race should not discourage those who run, but should inspire to a more rapid pace.

II. Things Which Impede Spiritual Progress.

Keeping in mind the figure of the race, there are some things which impede the progress of him who starts in the christian life, and which hinder him from being finally successful. Let us review a few of these.

A Poor Start.

The first thing which impedes progress and results in defeat and failure is a *poor start.* No doubt more people fail at this point than at any other. This is a result of superficial evangelism, with its slip-shod methods of hand-shaking, card-signing, church-joining revivals, without a genuine penitence, a thorough repentance, a forsaking of sin, a restitution for wrongs committed against others; producing a superficial, sentimental religion without any spiritual life, joy or power. There is positively nothing ahead of him who starts thus, but defeat and failure. There are not so many backsliders in the world as is sometimes supposed. A very large percentage of the so-called backsliders are persons who have failed at the point of starting. They may have even knelt at a public altar of prayer, have shed some tears, and professed pardon and peace; but God and they alone know that there was something in the life which was not surrendered, and which tied them to the starting base,

despite all their pretense and effort. This is not to be interpreted as an argument in favor of the doctrine of "once-in-grace, always-in-grace," or against the possibility of backsliding, but simply to indicate the point of failure There are some backsliders in the world, but not as many as is generally supposed.

The individual who fails at the point of starting has no possible chance to win out in the race. We were wise enough to know this when we were boys and girls, and ran foot races in school. Perhaps you remember those days. Laying down a board or making a mark upon the ground, we would line up, each boy and girl putting one foot to the point of starting. Some one counted: "One, two three," and away we went, each one doing his best. But one fellow calls: "Hold on there; I didn't get started rightly; Let us start again." This fellow was smart enough to know, that he who failed to start properly could not help but fail in the end. To accommodate the fellow who failed in the start, we backed up and started again. Persons starting in the christian race should be as wise as the school boy, at least; and when they discover that they are doomed to inevitable defeat in the christian race, because of a poor start, they should "back up" and take a new and right start.

Worldly Interestedness.

Besides the danger of failure at the starting point, there are also dangers of failure, incident to the way. Jesus made this plain, by the use of another figure—that of the sower. Being His own commentator upon the familiar parable, He said: "And that which fell among thorns are they, which when they have heard, go forth, and are choked with cares and riches and pleasures of this life, and bring no fruit to perfection," Luke 8:14.

It might be emphasized that this trinity of temptations constitutes three ways of approach to the attention and heart of him who starts in the christian life, and that he may pose out by heeding to the claims presented. *Cares* are of many kinds, some of which are, in themselves, legitimate. There are many cares, business cares, church cares, etc. Christ would not have us *careless,* but He would have every care, no matter how legitimate, to be secondary to the interests of the soul. Great and important as our cares may seem, they are not to be viewed as important enough to check our pace or shorten our strides, in the least, in the christian race.

The spirit of covetousness, or a desire to get rich, has resulted in a failure, upon the part of many who have started in the christian race. It is not necessary to get rich to lose out in this score, but a desire to get rich may accomplish the defeat. Many a man has failed to get rich, but lost his soul in the endeavor. Christ is not to be interpreted as having meant to teach that a Christian cannot be successful in business, or that success is an unmistakable evidence of backsliding, but that an undue anxiety for the application towards material things will hinder and even defeat spiritual progress.

The history of the pursuit of pleasure is a sad story. More bones have been bleached in this spiritual desert than in any other. The world is going pleasure mad, and it seems as though multiplied thousands of professing christians are in the procession. The false glitter and glare of pleasure have caught the attention of more eyes, and turned aside more feet from a successful christian race than perhaps any other thing. And still inventions for providing so-called pleasure continue to increase. According to the picture which Jesus gave of the conditions which will prevail to-

ward the close of this age, pleasure seeking will increase. It is a vain and fruitless effort to satisfy the cravings of the human heart. It is an attempt to satisfy the immortal longings of the soul with husks, when God alone can satisfy the soul's desire and fill the soul's capacity. Men seem not to realize this, and allow themselves to be defeated in the christian race, by turning aside to pursue these bursting soap-bubbles of pleasure, whose rainbow colors have attracted their attention.

Lack of Devotion.

The age in which we are living is one of intense activity. There was never as much unrest in the world as that which characterizes our times. This is the day of electricity, of the auto and the flying machine. Men live in a hurry; yea, a mad rush. Despite the efforts of the church to call men and women to prayer, devotion and worship, this spirit of hurry and hustle has stolen in upon many, and, unless we are very careful, will rob us of our communion with God. Already thousands of paths to secret prayer have grown over, innumerable family altars have been abandoned, many prayer-meetings have been broken up. no time to read, meditate, or pray is the encroaching spirit of the times, which is spelling defeat for many who were once live, spiritual christians. Progress was first checked, then the christian race abandoned. Lack of devotion is one cause. That person who neglects devotion is destined to defeat. He who persists in his devotions with unbroken regularity will make steady progress in the christian race.

Pessimistic as it might seem, there are reasons to believe that our present system of organization may be held responsible for the dwindling down and waning of the spirit of devotion. With a view to *doing,* the forces of the church

have been over-organized. The command goes out from leaders to *"do! do! do!"* At the same time they seem to have forgotten, that a prerequisite to successful doing is *being.* He cannot *do* who *is* not. People are urged to *do* Christian work who *are* not christians. Naturally and necessarily the effort results in failure, and, instead of solving the difficulty properly, the organizers add another wheel, pully and belt to the already powerless machinery. How much better it would be to get a vital connection with the power house of God, and by putting ourselves into a right attitude and relation with God, constitute a channel of power and blessing. Having gotten somewhat away from the figure of the race, we may come back and say: He who would be a practical successful Christian in the contest of life, must be one truly and genuinely at heart.

Unnecessary Loads.

History records that the contestants in the Olympic races, which we are still using as a figure, practiced no less than ten months previous to the final day. During this time they carried heavy weights, in order to accustom themselves to hardship. These weights could not have been borne upon the day of the contest with any hope of success, but were laid aside, upon that day, with the result that the contestant who had been accustomed to the load, could run as he never had run before, having been freed from his weights. This reminds us again of boyhood days, when we were compelled to wear boots or heavy shoes all winter. Finally, after the earth had turned again on its axis, after the sun's rays had melted the snow from the fence-corners, and the ground became warm, we received permission to remove our shoes. Do you remember? It seemed as though we had never run as fast before. Our steps were lengthened and our tread quicked, because of the weight which had been laid aside.

Now, he who runs successfully the christian race, dares not be encumbered or burdened with weights. The weights referred to in our text are, no doubt, the sins which load down every one who is not a christian. These must be laid aside, must be unloaded at the cross of Christ, or defeat is certain. No more can the Christian contestant expect to win, while loaded with sin, than could the Olympic contestant expect to win, carrying his weights and burdens. They must be laid aside. Oh that men might realize this, and leave their sins at the cross!

But there is something specific in the text, from which freedom is needed. It is called, "the sin which doth so easily beset us." It appears as though this is something which might not hinder in the starting of the christian race, but which might, sooner or later, entangle our feet, and cause us to fall. The colored man read it innocently but meaningly: "The sin which doth so easily *upset* us." What is this besetting sin which appears so hazardous? One answers: "My besetting sin is bad temper, resulting of course, in occasional bad words." Another says: "My besetting sin is covetousness." Another: "My besetting sin is jealousy," others confess to "pride, selfishness," etc. These indeed are besetting sins, but since they are results rather than causes, symptoms rather than diseases, we must look further back to find the seat of trouble. What is the cause of the stumbling, resulting from these "besetting sins." Hear the answer: It is "the sin." Not sin in the plural number, which are results, but sin, which is a specific cause. It must be that sin sometimes called by various names, such as: "Carnality, depravity, inbred sin, the old man," etc. If our text means anything, it must mean that there is freedom to be obtained from this sin. The process by which this deliverance is brought about is called, by the Scripture,

"sanctification." The state of being delivered is called, "Holiness." There is not only deliverance from the load of sin and guilt, which must be laid aside at the start of the race, but also freedom from "the sin," which is likely to entangle our feet, sooner or later, while we run. He who would succeed in the christian race must lay aside the "weights" and "the sin."

III. Things Which Inspire to a Rapid Pace.

Earth's Inquisitive Spectators.

Despised as the christian may be at certain times and in certain places, he is one of the most carefully observed citizens in the community. He is of every special interest to the saintliest, who takes pleasure in his successes, as well as to the most ungodly, who would rejoice in his failure. His conduct, his conversation, his business dealings, his every move is observed by an unnamed number of pairs of eyes, and weighed in the balances of so many judgments.

The motives which prompt some of their inquisitive observation of us are, in many cases, legitimate. There are those who are themselves conscious of a soul need, but having been impressed by the failures of others and the discouragements which issue from a thousand sources, have almost concluded that it would be in vain for them to attempt to be Christians. When one of us, as a friend, a neighbor or an acquaintance, starts in the christian race, a new interest is aroused. The soul in language sometimes expressed, sometimes unexpressed, reasons: "Will he hold out? Time will tell. He may or he may not. I will watch carefully." Days, weeks, months and finally years roll around. Let us observe the reasonings of an honest soul which has carefully watched the Christian who held out in the christian race. The soul again concludes: "After all, there are some who live true to their christian professions.

It *is* possible to be a Christian, and here is an example. If God can keep him true, He can keep me true as well." There are thousands of Christians, today, who were saved as the result of watching someone's life who ran in the Christian race. It may have been a husband or wife, a father or mother, a brother or sister, a son or a daughter, or possibly only a neighbor or an acquaintance; but that true life was the means of winning that soul for Christ.

Let us observe the reasonings of that soul who quietly watched the life of him who started in the christian race, but who fell by the way. That soul concludes: "I am no more able than he. If he could not hold out there is no need for me to try. I have less to help and more to hinder than he. There is no use." This soul turns away in despair, and Satan, taking advantage of the occasion, presses upon him the failure of another, until he cannot lift his eyes. A soul is lost because of the failure of one who started in the christian race, but who fell. There are many who do not read their Bibles, but who are reading the lives of professing christians. There are those who take no opportunity of placing themselves under the direct influence of the spoken Gospel and the Holy Spirit, but who are under the influences of our lives. This gives us all an opportunity to be preachers, and to win souls. The loudest sermons in any community are not the ones preached from behind sacred desks, great as these may be, but are the lives of those who are really followers of Jesus Christ. It is indeed, a responsible thing, to live. It has been said: "Every step we take, every move we make, we press keys and strike chords which will sound and vibrate throughout the vales and dales of heaven, or the corridors of hell." This is fearfully true. How necessary that we lay aside the weights, and the sin which is so likely to cause us to fall!

"But what has this to do with helping us in our christian race?" some one asks. It is this: "If some soul may be lost because of my failure, or some soul saved because of my success, at *any* cost, I'll be true. If even more than my own soul is at stake, I must take larger strides in this race," reasons the awakened contestant in the stadium of christian life. Inspired by the company of earth's spectators, the wise soul, bending every energy of his being toward success, pressed forward toward the prize.

Heaven's Multitude of Witnesses.

By an unhappy chapter division, which was made by the translators of our Bibles, these two first verses of the twelfth chapter of Hebrews were broken off from the eleventh chapter, to which they rightly belong. This is evidenced by the philosophical word "wherefore," with which these verses are introduced. It shows that the verses, which immediately follow, are links in the chain of truth which is being stated. The eleventh chapter is the great faith chapter, which catalogues the faith martyrs, from righteous Abel down to the time of writing. Want of space and time has hindered the writer from enumerating all of them. After reviewing this wonderful list of martyrs, of whom he declares, that the world was not worthy, he breaks out in the language: "Wherefore seeing we also are compassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset us, and let us run with patience the race that is set before us. Looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of all faith; who for the joy that was set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God."

It will be clearly seen that the "cloud of witnesses," re-

ferred to, is the company of faith martyrs. But what have they to do with us and we with them? How can they inspire us, who run the christian race? We have reasons to believe that those who have passed on to the beyond are still interested in the success of those who follow. This figure should not be pressed too severely, but Jesus declared that there is joy in the presence of the angels of God, over one sinner who repents. Perhaps back of that curtain which overhangs the future, nearer than we think, more interested in us than we realize, is that great cloud of witnesses. May we not, by faith at least, see this company of spectators seated in the amphitheatre of the skies? Can we not hear an occasional shout of cheer and see an occasional signal for encouragement from them as we run in the christian race? The self-sacrificing lives which they have lived and the heroic deaths which they died should spell courage and inspiration to us. If they cannot signal to us now, they have certainly sent back to us a message of cheer and inspiration.

Looking Unto Jesus

Great as is the inspiration which comes to contestants in the christian race, from the spectators of earth and the company of martyrs in heaven, there is an inspiration still greater. It is that which comes by looking unto Jesus. Christ is our true pattern, our worthy example. No apostle or saint is worthy of our imitation, except as he imitates Christ. We dare only walk in his steps as he has walked in the steps of our Saviour.

When inspiration is not available from any other source, it may be had from the holy life, the unselfish ministry and the dying love of Jesus. Upon Him was heaped the greatest reproach and curse, but out from Him radiated the greatest blessings. He was, in his humanity, an outcast,

but made many rich. He it was who stepped into the ranks of humanity, and made our failures good, even to the paying of our penalty of death.

He who keeps his eyes upon Jesus cannot fail. He who gets his eyes off Jesus is certain to fail. He who looks constantly to Him will have no time to watch others and to advertise their faults and failures. There are those whom Paul describes as, measuring themselves by themselves, and comparing themselves among themselves, but of whom he declares: "They "are not wise." This is the tendency of a nominal religion; but the true christian measures himself by Christ and His word, and not by others.

Again, Jesus said: "No man, having put his hand to the plough, and looking back, is fit for the kingdom." This is the employment of another figure, and reminds one of the furrows of a field. Well do I remember when, as a boy upon the farm, I took so much pleasure in making a straight furrow, that I could scarcely wait until the end was reached to look back to see. Sometimes I would look back before, and when the end was reached a crook in the furrow would always mark the place where I had looked back. He who starts in the christian race dare not look back, upon penalty of failure. In a certain college a foot race was being held, and, when the race was about finished, the apparent winner looked back to see how much he was in the lead, when the next one darted past him and won the contest. He had actually lost the race because of looking back. While the christian race is one, the success of which does not depend upon the success or failure of others, but which may be won by all who run, looking back will mean defeat. Let us not look to one another, or back, but unto Jesus.

CHAPTER VIII

THE SERVICE OF LOVE

"He that hath My commandments, and keepeth them, he it is that loveth Me," John 14:21.

It was more than a passing sentiment which Jesus expressed when He spoke to His disciples the words: "He that hath my commandments, and keepeth them, he it is that loveth me." This declaration fell from the lips of the world's Savior and greatest Teacher during the closing hours of His earthly ministry, when He had gathered His disciples about Him in the "upper room" for their parting message.

Love is eternal in its nature. It is that attribute of God which has dominated all of His creative acts, predominated in all of His attitude and dealings with men. It is the universal law which determines the conduct of God and angels and will ever regulate the relation of redeemed men to God, and to each other.

There are two kinds of love mentioned in the New Testament. One is known to the Greek student as *philos,* and means *human love*: The other is known as *agape,* and means *divine love.* The first mentioned is that love which loves our families, our friends, and those who love us. The second is that love wherewith we love God, and as christians, one another, and which enables us to love those who hate us, who despitefully use us—our very enemies. Human love appears to be necessary, under the present conditions and circumstances, for the proper maintenance of family relationships, but divine love is also essential, to enable us to love everybody as we should.

Love a Servant.

Love is a servant. The greatest illustration of this fact is found in Jesus, who, though He possessed an eternity of existence with the Father, and shared in the creation and control of worlds, loved so much that came to be a servant. Until His coming the world knew no better than that he who was served most, had the largest number of servants obeying his commands, was greatest. He completely overturned this false philosophy and practice, and declared by precept and example that he who served most was greatest, Matt. 23:11. No life was so unselfishly spent: No servant more faithful: No service so unfailing. His whole life, from the manger cradle to the rock-hewn but borrowed tomb, was one continuous outpouring of service. No needy, penitent soul was ever turned away from His ministries. The blind were made to see; the deaf to hear; the lame to walk. Lepers were cleansed; palsid relieved; dead were raised. This is the highest example of service, and was the interpreting of love in living, unmistakable terms to the world.

Love Loves to Serve.

Love loves to serve, and in serving finds its highest enjoyment. This fact can be proven by the love which is purely human, such as the love of a mother, father, child, husband, wife, etc.

Who can forget the service of a mother, who hazarded her own life to bring us into the world; who watched over us by night and by day; who soothed away our pain and shared our sorrows; whose life was, from early until late, one continuous round of labor, care anxiety, and sometimes hardships? Who will deny but that such service was prompted by love? Take away the love, and the service becomes unendurable. Take away the service, and love has

lost one of its highest enjoyments. The empty cradle, empty arms and empty bed may mean less labor and toil, but they also mean less enjoyment.

Who would be so ungrateful as not to recall the service of a father, whose hands were hardened and whose steps were shortened by years of incessant labour for his family? Do you pity him? He does not recognize himself a subject for pity, neither does he seek it. The secret of it all is love, and that service is but a natural consequence of love.

One of the most sacred memories of my life is that of a father's never-ceasing service of love. During the summer and autumn months a small amount of the scanty earnings were laid by, and a little later we were taken to town for our necessary winter outfits. Each one of us boys received a suit of clothes, overcoat, shoes, etc.; and if anything remained after all the boys had been provided, father's turn would be next. So frequently (oh I speak of it with subdued emotion) nothing remained for the supplying of father's needs, and his old suit and overcoat had to do a while longer. Yet even this seemed to be satisfactory with him. Love-service is the secret. We might enlarge at length upon love-services in other relations, but this is not necessary. The fact is established beyond successful contradiction, that *love* loves to serve, and in serving finds its highest enjoyment.

Service a Proof of Love.

If it is true that love is a servant and finds pleasure in serving, the legitimate conclusion is that which does not serve is not love. There is no exception to this where there is ability to serve. Service, then, is the proof of love. No profession of love is sufficient. That profession of love must be enforced by a corresponding service, or it proves itself to be hypocrisy.

Let us imagine a father who persists on a profession of love for his children, who at the same time spends his money in the saloon and gambling den, while his little ones are naked, hungry and cold. Can such profession of love be credited? Suppose the case of a husband, who professes to love his faithful wife, the bride of his youth and the sacrificing mother of his children, while at the same time he is known to spend frequent nights in the brothel. Such profession would indeed be a burlesque upon love. What of a child who professes true love for father and mother, but who is disobedient, irreverent and incorrigible? There is something seriously wrong with such love. A little boy, who was too young to talk plain, was taught to answer his father's question: "How can papa's little boy prove that he loves papa," by saying: "By beyo papa." This little boy expressed the true philosophy of the service of love. It is simply stating the truth of the text in other words.

How about the individual who professes love to Christ, but refuses to obey His commandments? Too many there are who obey such commands as please them, but refuse obedience to such commands as do not suit their fancy. It is a regretted but evident fact that there are far too few evidences of real love for Christ in the loves of professed christians. Real piety and vital godliness are not insisted upon by the nominal church, and are scarcely expected from professed followers of Jesus. When speaking of commands to be obeyed, not only such as fell directly from His own lips are meant, but all commands addressed to us by inspiration.

We are commanded not to love the world, neither the things that are in the world; but still professed christians continued to evidence their love for the world by attending to worldly interests, practicing worldly habits, pursuing

worldly pleasures, following worldly fashions, despite the fact that the Bible declares: "If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him," I John 2:15.

We are commanded to divorce ourselves from the world in the following strong language: "Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing." Despite this command, enforced by a discernable philosophy and a promise of sonship, multitudes of professed christians persist in alliances with secret, oathbound societies, not only violating the command of Jesus, to "swear not at all," but also placing oaths of secrecy between themselves and their wives, thus violating their sacred marriage vows, also mingling in society and breathing an atmosphere which no honest, informed man will defend as congenial to true spirituality. This disregard for the commands of the Bible is not confined to laity, but is practiced by the leaders—the ministers themselves, until it has come to pass that it is no uncommon thing to see the mark of the beast upon the coat lapel of the "pastor," the "reverend" and "the doctor," and he who says a word against it is branded. As long as such conditions exist and such an amount of energy, time and money are wasted upon secret, oath-bound and similar societies, the church will neither be engaged in cheap commercialism or go begging to maintain an existence; prayer meetings will be conducted by women, if at all, and old-fashioned, satan-despised revivals will not be in evidence.

Again, we are commanded to adorn ourselves with "modest apparel," not with "gold or pearls or costly array," etc., 1 Tim. 2:8-10 and 1 Peter 3:3-5. Despite these plain commands for modest apparel, not rigid nor formal but such as becometh saints, the masses of professing christians persist in aping the abominal fashions created in licentious

Paris, and to hang upon themselves artificial trappings which would materially cheapen the appearance of a genuine christian, and which appear, indeed, as cheap and tiny compared to the beauty with which He "beautifies the meek" who receive salvation. Oh, how little is the Bible respected, by professing christians! We might review almost every command of Jesus, and discover it trampled beneath the unhallowed feet of worldly professors.

Pessimistic as it may seem, we still maintain that there are few evidences of love to be found in the nominal church, for Jesus says: "He that hath my commandments, and keepeth them, he it is that loveth me," and; "If ye love me, keep my commandments," and: "If a man love me, he will keep my words." Not our *profession,* but our *service* proves our love.

Love Essential to Service.

It is a fact so familiar that we are likely to overlook it, that love is essential to service. He who serves, who has not the inspiration which results from love, is not at his best. He may serve, but he cannot serve his best.

Love Makes Certain Accomplishments Possible. Love will undertake to do things which less than love declares impossible. In fact, it will undertake the thing which would never have been dreamed of otherwise. The greatest example of an undertaking conceived in love, and worked out in minutest detail according to that eternal law is the plan of human redemption. Every act of unselfish devotion, every service rendered for the purpose of saving a lost and ruined world, since then, is a result of the same love which in its miracle-working way gives men a vision and moves them to undertake great things for God. In this regard love works not a few nor small miracles.

Love Makes Hard Tasks Easy. It is one thing to per-

form a hard task, and another thing to perform a hard task joyously and with a smile. This is that which puts joy into the routine of a mother's duties; it is that which sends the father and husband to his difficult tasks with a strong arm and a new courage.

No man, since Christ, towered so high in the undertaking of great tasks and the accomplishing of great things as the apostle Paul. His was not an easy way, not a smooth path. The carrying of the Gospel to the heathen, in Paul's day, was a more difficult task than in our day, and with organized missionary boards, facilities for travel and communication. Describing the difficulty of his tasks he says: "Of the Jews five times received I forty stripes, save one. Thrice was I beaten with rods, once was I stoned, thrice I suffered shipwreck, a night and a day I have been in the deep; In journeyings often, in perils of waters, in perils of robbers, in perils by mine own countrymen, in perils by the heathen, in perils in the city, in perils in the wilderness, in perils in the sea, in perils among false brethren; In weariness and painfulness, in watchings often, in hunger and thirst, in fastings often, in cold and nakedness. Besides those things that are without, that which cometh upon me daily, the care of all the churches," II Cor. 11:24-28. Speaking of these things he characterized them "light afflictions," and further declares: "I take pleasure in infirmities, in reproach, in necessities, in persecutions, in distresses for Christ's sake," II Cor. 12:10. To a minister, whose life is one of unusual toil and unselfish devotion, a friend recently remarked: "Your work must certainly be hard and trying." To this he replied: "Oh yes, it is naturally hard work, but being a service of love, it is easy." A hard task becoming easy is one of the beautiful paradoxes of religion, but the secret is love. Love makes hard tasks easy.

Love Makes the Humblest Service a Pleasure. It is not only the "hard" tasks which need an application of love to make them easy; but for the humble tasks, to make them a pleasure, a baptism of love is necessary. Sometimes the glory of accomplishing a hard task is no small reward, but the humble services remain to be compensated for in some other way.

Again love gave to the world an example of humble service in the prison of Jesus. As truly as He was the linking together of God and man, He was the combining of the two opposite extremes, dignity and humility. Contrary to the spirit of the disciples, when they were disputing who should be greatest in the kingdom, He assumed the role of the humblest of servants, and surprised them by pouring water into a basin and washing their feet; and further commanded that they should do as He had done. Love transforms services so humble, so common place, that they would otherwise be despised and turned away from, into a pleasure. See that missionary dressing the wound of a poor African slave, or carrying the Gospel of the lepers of India, or going from hovel to hut in the slums of our cities. Do they frown or grumble? Not so. They wear upon their faces a smile which wealth and society might covet. Love has transformed this menial service into a pleasure.

Love Makes Service Unselfish. He who obeys God because he loves Him, does not merely serve Him to keep out of hell, or to merit heaven. Of course he is conscious of the fact that there is a place called "hell" in the Bible, to which he does not want to go, and a heaven to which he hopes and expects to go, but these are not the motives which prompt his service. Love is the compelling force. He serves God because he loves to, not from fear of punishment.

Then, too, love service is a more exalted service than that which operates upon the basis of gain or remuneration. Even the farm hand or house servant, who serves merely for the sake of the pay envelope, are by no means ideal employees. There are time servers merely, constantly keeping their eye upon the clock, with coats and hats on, ready to shoot through the door at the first sound of the whistle. Too many there are who are ready to excuse themselves from the service of the Lord upon slight pretexts. Such discloses the fact that the motive of their service is less than love.

He who serves because of love, loses sight of what we commonly call duty. Duty service is cold, compared to a service of love. What of the husband and father who looks after the necessity of the wife and children out of mere duty? What of the wife and mother who attends to the multitude of things incident to wifehood and motherhood, out of duty? Such services would become a burden, instead of a delight. Services in such relation, based upon burden, are upon a false basis. Love should be the motive, and then duty will be lost sight of.

Are there not too many ministers who attend to their ministry prompted by duty, instead of love? Are there not too many Sunday School Superintendents, class leaders, deacons and stewards who are prompted to service by duty? Are there not too many laymen who attend prayer meeting, Sunday School, preaching service, who support the cause of Christ, with their means, out of sense of duty? When such is the case, service becomes a drag instead of an increasing delight. This is what is wrong with many a man, and many a church. Where obedience to the commands of Christ is practiced, it is too often from a sense of duty. Brethren, this is not as it should be. Love is the motive which should move us to an increasingly large and efficient service for the Mas-

ter. The love of God shed abroad in the hearts of His people, by the Holy Spirit, will greatly revolutionize our service for Him. Herein lies the secret of a happy and successful Christian life. "He that hath my commandments, and keepeth them, he it is that loveth me."

CHAPTER IX

NOT TAKEN BUT KEPT.

"I pray not that thou shouldest take them out of the world, but that thou shouldest keep them from evil." St. John 17:15.

One evening, about nineteen hundred years ago, a little company of disciples had met with their Lord, in an upper room in the city of Jerusalem, upon a memorable occasion. After the instituting of the Christian sacrament, at the passover table, and the affectionate farewell address Jesus lifted up His eyes and offered His last intercessory prayer. Let us, in our imagination, climb the outside stairway leading to this upper room, and, having put our ear to the key hole, listen to the earnest petitions of this wonderful intercession.

After addressing Himself to the Father, acknowledging the completion of His earthly mission, He proceeds to commend his disciples in such strong terms which seem almost to awaken us in a holy envy. Should any one be tempted to accept the mistaken idea that the disciples were not converted until Pentecost, this prayer should forever settle the question. For Jesus to testify of His disciples: "they have kept thy word," "they are thine," "I am glorified in them" and "they are not of the world, even as I am not of the world" evidences, in their behalf, a high standard of experience and practice.

Immediately upon the conclusion of the commendatory items of His prayer, He begins His requests, and eagerly we listen as we hear Him pray. "I pray not that thou shouldest take them out of the world, but that thou shouldest keep them from the evil."

The mediatorial work being finished, Jesus was about to go away, and the disciples were to take up the work exactly where He laid it down. He had finished the work they could not do, and they were to begin the work which He did not come to do. He had a mission, an important mission for His disciples.

They were to witness concerning Him, beginning at home, (Jerusalem) and, by an ever-widening circle of testimony, carry the gospel unto the uttermost parts of the earth. They were to build up the kingdom, the foundation of which He had just laid. Entrusted with this stupendous task, this important mission, it was highly essential that the disciples should remain in the world. No time to shirk now; no longing to depart after the offering of this prayer. Might He not have prayed that His disciples be taken with Him? No. Although like all who live the pilgrim life, they may have felt the pilgrim loneliness and the desire to depart; they, like all of God's true children would not think of shirking a single required task, nor leave a single item of work unfinished.

May we conclude that God had a distinct plan for His disciples? More, may we not conclude that God has a distinct plan for *every* life? To the life absolutely abandoned to God nothing *happens.* Everything is, at least, divinely permitted, if not divinely sent.

"Keep them from the evil" is a significant request, when the wickedness of this old world is properly taken into account. Can we fathom its depth; can we understand its meaning? This was an earnest prayer, a prayer of faith, and whatever was involved in the request we may at once assume was granted. Let us determine if possible what Jesus really meant to ask in behalf of His disciples.

Not kept from Temptations

From what did He pray that they should be kept? Not from temptations. This is evident from the fact that they were not given immunity from temptations, which they would have been had Jesus really intended that in this intercessory prayer. It is not sin to be tempted, but it is yielding to temptation that is sin. Even Jesus, Himself, was severely tempted, and, we who are less than He, need not expect immunity from temptations. Satan often accuses Christians for having committed sin when they have only been tempted; and intimidates them by telling them that, if they were what they profess to be, they would not be tempted thus. Whatever the prayer was intended to mean, in behalf of His disciples, it is evident that He did not pray that they should be kept from temptations.

Not kept from Trials.

To be kept from evil did not mean that the disciples should be kept from trials. This is again evident from the fact that they were not kept from trials, but were entering more properly without a period of extreme trial; and we assume that this earnest prayer of Jesus was, in some very material way, answered in behalf of the disciples.

Better than we know it, Jesus understood that trial is a consistent ingredient in the probationary life; and the disciples, being on probation, trial would naturally be a part of their heritage. "All they who will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution," is not a contradiction of the intercessory prayer of Prayer, when properly understood. Strange, fiery, unaccountable trials are foretold for the Christian, in 1st Peter 4:12; and these are not to be evidences of the disfavor of God. Even Jesus, Himself, was so

sorely tried, that, at the close of the trial, angels came and ministered unto Him.

Trials are divinely permitted, and seemingly constitute a prescribed course in the curriculum of the school of Christ. They are said to be "more precious than gold." More precious than gold because they produce something which cannot be purchased with gold. That something is pure character. Character is what we are, not what we seem to be; and true character is not obtained in death, nor in the after-life, but there. The chance for heaven is very small for the individual who cannot keep from backsliding over summer. It was said, who not long since, of a certain people, where there is an occasional high tide revival, but which soon dies away as surely as it comes, that if God wanted to get those people to heaven, he would have to come and take them on surprise, just at the close of a revival. Do you think that God sneaks people away and hurries them into heaven because they cannot keep from backsliding down here? "I pray not that thou shouldest take them out of the world, but that thou shouldest keep them from the evil"? We conclude that although the prayer involved something in behalf of the disciples, it did not mean that they should be kept from trials.

Not kept from hard labor.

Did He pray that they should be kept from hard work? In all the history of the world, since the fall in Eden, the building up of the kingdom of God has been a difficult task; and it can scarcely be conceived that Jesus should pray that those upon whose shoulders the initial task was about to fall should be kept from hard work.

The world's current is strongly opposed to anything which advances the interest of Christ's kingdom. Satan is

the present prince of this world, and although as a usurper he reigns, and will some time be dethroned and cast out, yet his forces meet the people of God at every turn, and every inch of ground possessed by the church has been and continues to be severely contested. He who desires to fold his arms in ease has no business to enlist with Jesus Christ. The building up of His kingdom requires hard work; yea more, it requires soldier determination, soldier courage and the enduring of soldier hardship.

The poet understood this when he wrote.

"Are there no foes for me to fight;
Must I not stem the flood?
In this vile world a friend to grace,
To help me on to God?

The Apostle Paul testified to this when he wrote to Timothy: "Fight the good fight of faith" and "Endure hardness as a good soldier."

Should any one be tempted to seek excuse from hard labor, Jesus did not pray that the disciples might be, whatever the prayer may have meant.

Not kept from Martyrdom.

Did Jesus pray that His disciples should be excused from the so-called evil of martyrdom? If so, His prayer was wholly in vain, for every one of the remaining eleven apostles, save one, died a martyr's death. Of course, we remember that Judas committed suicide. The apostles, each one, entered upon his divinely assigned field, not shrinking from hard labor nor self denial; and likewise each one sealed his faith in his own blood. St. John died a natural death, when about ninety-eight years old, and was buried at Eph-

esus. In vain do we seek for an interpretation of the prayer of Jesus, should we hope to find evidence that He prayed that the disciples be spared the painfully cruel death of martyrdom.

A Glorious Discovery.

As we listen still, wondering what then this prayer may mean, we are startled beyond measure, when we hear the Lord Jesus, in the same tender tones and with the same intercessory earnestness, pray: "Neither pray I for these alone, but for them also who shall believe on me through their word." "Their word!" "those who shall believe on me through their word!" What is it, and who are these? Does it mean the preached and written gospel, and they who have accepted the Christ of that Gospel, throughout the succeeding generations? Oh glorious discovery, the same prayer which Jesus prayed for His immediate disciples, He prayed for His disciples of all ages, including you and me! "I pray not that thou shouldest take them out of the world, but that thou shouldest keep them from the evil" was also prayed for *me*.

Since the wonderful request of this prayer is discovered to be the legacy handed down by the dying Lord to every Christian—to you and me, we cannot afford to rest content until we have understood its meaning. It is a significant prayer, and possibly contains a rich treasure.

Retracing our meditations with their legitimate conclusions, and associating with these the immediate disciples whose lives we have a right to believe reflected, in some certain measure, this heart-cry intercession of Jesus, let us see if we can discover the true meaning of our text.

Kept from yielding to Temptation.

That they should be kept from temptation Jesus did not

pray. This is evident from the fact that none are exempted from them, even Jesus Himself being tempted in all points like as we are; and that is not sinful to be tempted. To the contrary, may it not be, the holier the life, the keener the temptation? This prayer, then, so far as it relates to temptation, was not a request that the disciples of Jesus should be kept from temptation, but kept from yielding to temptation, when tempted. In yielding lies the evil from which Jesus would have us kept.

We must now anticipate a little as to the time of the fulfillment of this prayer. As we shall see, a little later, this prayer became effective at Pentecost, and not until then. Between its utterance and Pentecost, about fifty days later, are some occurrences, not covered by this intercession, just as were all occurrences previous to its utterance. Just why this is true will be seen more plainly later.

Kept from yielding to temptation when tempted! Once the disciples had openly yielded to the temptation of self-seeking—desiring to be greatest in the kingdom—yielding even to the point of public strife. Not so, after this intercession is fulfilled in them. Once they had yielded to the temptation of jealousy, even to the forbidding of such who cast out devils in Jesus name, but who would not follow with them. No longer were they guilty of yielding to any such temptation, after this prayer became their realized legacy. Once they yielded to the temptation to anger, even threatening, Elijah like, to call down fire and consume a city which would not receive Jesus. This anger was turned into pity, when once this prayer of Jesus became effective.

Let us not forget that the same petition is ours. Jesus prayed not that we should be kept from temptation, but from yielding when tempted. What a safe retreat, what a security! When tempted, hide away in the prayer of Je-

sus. His prayer avails; He is our great intercessor. When tempted to do wrong flee into this hiding place, and you are safe. Would you commit a beautiful little line which can be learned in two minutes, and when once learned, can never be forgotten?

"The devil trembles when he sees,
The weakest saint upon his knees."

This then, is the meaning of the intercessory prayer of Jesus as it relates to temptation.

Kept from fainting in Trail

Again, we have concluded that the prayer of Jesus did not ask that the disciples be exempted from trial. This conclusion we based upon the facts that they were not exempted from trial; that strange and fiery trials may be expected true disciples of Christ; and that trials are more precious than gold, for by them souls are developed for heaven. What relation, then does the intercessory prayer of Jesus sustain to the Christian's trials? He prayed not that the disciples should be kept from trial, but from being overcome when tried.

Well did the Savior know the trials which lay in their paths of duty and obedience. Trials on land, on sea, because of formal Judaism, as well as idolatrous heathenism. Trials because of false brethren, and of misunderstandings. Trials of scourgings and imprisonments. Physical trials, —trials of every kind and color. With all these trials before them, who will deny them the intercession of the world's great High Priest?

When in the midst of life's fiercest trials, if we may hear Jesus saying to us, like He did to Peter: "I have prayed

for thee," new strength and grace and glory will be ours because of the trial. The God who sent angels to minister to our Christ in trial, will answer the prayer of Jesus in our behalf, if angels must be dispatched from highest heaven to accomplish it. As in the case of Job, God marks the boundary to which Satan can go in trying us, and he cannot go a step farther. Not kept from trial, but kept from being overcome when tried.

Kept from shirking hard labor.

Then, Jesus did not ask, for His disciples, exemption from hard labor, as is evident from the immensity of the task assigned, the commission given. "Go ye therefore and teach all nations" will require many days of weary travel, many nights without canopy or pillow, perhaps many mornings, noons, and evenings of fasting. Jesus did not pray that they should be kept from hard labor, but from shrinking from the task, or from fainting when performing it.

At this point we may discover a divine philosophy in the extending of the intercessions of Jesus as far as to all who shall believe on Him, for it occurs that the task of carrying out the commission which Jesus gave to His disciples will occupy every generation of true disciples of Jesus until He comes again. Jesus, then, prayed not that we should be spared hard labour. His prayer, as it relates to the task of building up and extending His kingdom, would request for us that we should be given grace not to desert, not to shirk hard labor, and not to faint when in the midst of hardest toil for the master. He who turns his back upon Christian duty places himself outside of the intercessory prayer of Jesus; but he who faithfully puts his shoulders beneath the tasks divinely assigned may feel the undergirdings of this wonderful intercession. Whoever it

be—class leader, deacon, Sunday School superintendent or teacher, minister, worker, presiding elder, editor or laity, what a remarkable privilge to be included in the prayer of Jesus! Oh multiplied duties! Oh cares of number! Oh labor without end! These can all be joyously borne and faithfully kept, in the light of the fact that Jesus prayed for me.

Kept from shrinking from Martyrdom.

Finally, Jesus did not pray that the disciples should be kept from martyrdom, as is evidenced by the fact that all of them, save one, died as martyrs of the Christian faith. He would not have them unnecessarily, recklessly, or fanatically seek to become martyrs. Their remaining in the world was too important for that. His prayer, then, as it relates to the subject of martyrdom, would request not that they should be kept from martyrdom, but that they might be kept from shrinking from martyrdom, should it become necessary to lay down their lives for the gospel.

No doubt in this intercession lies the secret of their calmness and joy, when facing death for Jesus' sake. Some of the disciples suffered the most cruel and shameful deaths, but not a single word of complaint is recorded. Tradition tells us that an iron rod was thrust through the body of Thomas, and that he was hung between two trees. James was thrust from a pinnacle of the temple, and then beaten to death with a fullers club. Bartholomew was skinned alive. Peter was crucified, but when about to be nailed to the cross he felt unworthy to be crucified as his Lord was, with head upward, so requested that he might be crucified with head downward.

The Christ who prayed thus for the immediate disciples, prayed also thus for the disciples of today. He

would not have us unnecessarily, recklessly nor fanatically run into perils, but would have us always to be ready to cheerfully answer, in the affirmative, the question concerning a willingness to die for Jesus' sake.

When a youth, perhaps foolishly, I seemed to covet the privilege of sometimes being a martyr for Jesus. While it is not the privilege of every Christian to be burned at the stake, fed to the lions or eaten by cannibals—not their privilege to die a martyr's death—it is the privilege of every Christian to live a martyr's life. How much less is the really consecrated life, than a martyr's life? When the Lord, Himslf, distributes the crowns, I doubt very much whether there will be any difference between the crowns given to those who have died martyr's deaths, and those who have lived martyr's lives. Poetically we speak of martyr's crowns, in contrast to all others, but scripturally and in reality there is no such distinction. Not that they should be kept from martyrdom, but kept from the evil of shrinking from martyrdom, if martyrdom is necessary for the advancement of the interests of His kingdom.

Means of this Transformation.

There is another item in this intercessory prayer which discloses the means by which the transformation is to be effected, in the lives of the disciples. It is this: "Sanctify them through thy truth." Pure hearts must be the sources from which issue pure lives. A tree must must be good to produce good fruit. A fountain must be sweet to give sweet water. No life can be practically pure, unless the heart itself is pure.

Human nature has not changed materially since the offering of this prayer; and the requirement for a holy life of discipleship then, is the same requirement now. Conse-

quently, relative to this item of the prayer, we hear Jesus also saying: "Neither pray I for these alone, but for all them which shall believe on me through their word." Disciple, young or old, rich or poor, ignorant or learned, Jesus prayed that you might be sanctified. Herein is the secret of being kept.

Extent of the Effects.

The blessed experience of a pure heart is not to be confined, in its effects, entirely to its possessor. Next to its own possessor, other disciples will be effected. "That they may be one" is assigned as a reason for which Jesus prays that the disciples should be sanctified. One in purpose, one in effort—no seeking of office, position, or leadership, but in honor preferring one another. In all times, places and conditions, wherever disciples come into possession of the legacy of clean hearts, unity is the unfailing result.

Then, the affects of pure lives, resulting in a unity of the disciples of Christ, are to be extended further, even to the unsaved. Again we hear Jesus praying: "That the world may know that thou hast sent me." Here is the divine order of the building up of the kingdom of God—from the heart outward. When the order is reversed, all efforts are in vain. The word of God, spoken is powerful; the word of God lived is more powerful. The loudest sermon preached in any community is not the one spoken from the pulpit, but the one lived by the true disciple of Christ. A true disciple becomes an incarnation of the truth which he believes and teaches, a sample of what he professes. There is nothing, in the whole wide world, so convincing of the reality of religion as the *unity* of the church of Christ. On the other hand, there is nothing which is so despairing to the progress of the gospel as a company of professed dis-

ciples at variance, each one seeking self-promotion, at envy and strife. Disciples who would be kept from such things must have the remedy—clean hearts.

One More Petition

In conclusion, there remains yet one more desire in the heart of the Intercessor. What more could he ask in behalf of the disciples? Still He prays: "Father, I will that they also, whom thou hast given me, be with me where I am: that they may behold my glory." He is not content to leave them here always, though it is important that they should remain yet a while. Paraphrasing the language of Jesus, we find it to mean something like this: Oh Father, grant to my disciples the richest and choicest, in their own personal lives, obtainable by grace in this world. Make them pure and supremely happy. Enable them to live in sweetest fellowship and most sacred communion with each other. Make their lives, individually and collectively, true samples of thy saving and keeping grace. Help them to extend the borders of thy kingdom until their lives have been poured out in unselfish devotion. Then, oh Father, as their mantles fall upon succeeding generations of disciples, grant every item of my petition to them as well; and bring those whom thou hast given me, of every succeeding generation, to behold my glory, the glory which I had with thee before the world was. Amen.

CHAPTER X

THE HEAVENLY VISION

"Whereupon, O king Agrippa, I was not disobedient unto the heavenly vision," Acts 26:19.

These are significant words and disclose the secret of the conversion and career of a remarkable man. As we review them in the light of the history of the great apostle, we are compelled to acknowledge the fact that this testimony as the key to his great and successful life.

The historical setting or connection of the text is interesting. Paul had been arrested by the Jews and placed in prison by Felix, the Roman governor of Judea. When Paul made his defense before Felix, so powerful was his message on righteousness, temperance and judgment, that Felix was mightily wrought upon and trembled; but, refusing to yield, he sent Paul back to prison, where he allowed him to remain for two years, hoping to be given money for his release. At the end of these two years Felix was removed from office and Festus was placed in his position, and found Paul still in prison. At once the Jews demanded that Paul be tried before the new ruler, and when given a hearing before him, Festus was puzzled because of the insufficiency of the charges. Very soon Agrippa, king of the provinces of Galilee and Perea, comes to welcome him unto his office, and Paul's case was laid before him. As he stood before Agrippa, he told the story of his life and conversion, and related the remarkable vision which he had while on his way to Damascus, and closed by saying: "Whereupon, O king Agrippa, I was not disobedient unto the heavenly vision." So powerful and convincing

were Paul's words, that Agrippa exclaimed. "Almost thou persuadest me to be a Christian." Having been wrought upon the truth, but failing to yield, Agrippa gave to the world an example of those who are "almost persuaded" but altogether unsaved.

Paul's Heavenly Vision.

The vision to which he here refers is that vision which he had when, on the Damascus road, there shone about him a light exceeding the brightness of the noonday sun. Having fallen to the ground, he heard a voice saying: "Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me?" Having answered: "Who art thou, Lord," a voice from heaven said: "I am Jesus whom thou persecutest." The vision which Paul had was of Jesus. It was the vision of Christ which wrought the marvelous transformation in his life, changing him from a blood-thirsty, hard-hearted, cruel persecutor of Christians to a gentle, tender-hearted loving servant of Jesus Christ, and a brave defender of the christian faith. It was this vision which caused him to abandon every earthly ambition, and to lay himself unreservedly at the feet of Christ for service and sacrifice.

While this vision, which he characterized as "the heavenly vision," was the one which marked the crisis of his life, there were lesser visions which made their contributions to Paul's conversion.

Paul, in defending his claims as an apostle, professed to have seen Jesus, which appears to have been one of the necessary qualifications for apostleship. (See Acts 1:21; I Cor. 9:1). The question arises as to the time when Paul saw Jesus. Some insist that he refers to the vision which is spoken of in this text. He may, but there are reasons to believe that he meant something else. What is there to

prove that Paul had not seen and heard Jesus while he was ministering and teaching about Jerusalem? Paul's conversion took place about 36 A. D., and Jesus was crucified 30 A. D. At Paul's conversion we find him a leader of the Jewish party and a strong factor in the Sanhedrin. Although he had forged his way to the front hurriedly, and there is no reason to believe that he shared in the arrest, trial and crucifixion of Jesus, there are plenty of reasons to believe that he had seen and heard Christ, while as a young man he lived contemporaneously with Him at Jerusalem. This early knowledge of Jesus may have constituted a comparatively minor vision, which prepared him for the larger vision.

There is also another vision which Paul had, which must have stamped itself indelibly upon his heart and memory: it was the stoning St. Stephen, the first christian martyr. As the death of Stephen is narrated by the inspired historian, St. Luke, just before the conversion of Saul, the conclusion of Saul, the conclusion is that but a little time intervened. Probably it had not a little to do with the preparing of the heart of Saul for the heavenly vision.

While St. Stephen was being stoned to death, it is said: "The witnesses laid down their clothes at a young man's feet, whose name was Saul." It is also stated that "Saul was consenting unto his death." He Himself said, speaking of the death of the early martyrs: "When they were put to death, I gave my voice against them." In relating his conversion and the events leading up to it, Paul speaks of a trance which he had, while in prayer in the temple, in which he made this confession to God: When the blood of thy martyr Stephen was shed, I also was standing by and consenting unto his death, and kept the raiment

of them that slew him," Acts 22:20. What an awful experience! To have the memory haunted with a scene such as Paul witnessed when St. Stephen was killed, when, as stones were being showered upon him, he looked up and saw the glory of God and Jesus standing on the right hand of God, and falling upon his knees, like his Lord, prayed: "Lay not this sin to their charge," must have been awful experience. As he witnessed that love, that forgiving spirit, he must have been convinced that this man who died so triumphantly had a religion which outclassed his, which was altogether different from his religion which he was so zealously defending. This was also one of the lesser visions which Paul had, preparing him for the larger heavenly vision—the supreme vision—Jesus.

Heavenly Visions of Today.

There are those who constantly desire and demand for themselves the experiences of others. Some one may attempt to excuse his indifferent and irreligious life by the fact that God has not favored him with a vision such as Paul had. In all New Testament narrative there is no other record of such a remarkable vision and experience, and we who live today may demand such recognition in vain. Perhaps if there was in all the world another Saul of Tarsus, prejudiced by the same early teaching, qualified by such giant intellectuality, needed so badly to interpret the doctrines of God and to carry the Gospel to the regions beyond, the Lord would arrest him in a similar way. God gives men heavenly visions in keeping with the age in which they live, and consistent with the light they have.

Nevertheless, the visions which God gives men today are as unmistakable, and reveal the same Christ as the vision which Paul had. The supreme vision is still Jesus.

There are various ways by which God reveals Christ. First, He reveals Him in His word. Few people estimate properly the Word of God as a revelation of Christ. This revelation lies fundamentally as a basis of all religious experience and service. It is the world evangel, without which all men would lie in hopeless darkness, and without which the Holy Spirit's ministry would be fruitless if indeed He would have come at all. It may be said to be at once the most familiar and the most unknown book. Its presence and extensive circulation are facts well known and almost taken for granted, while the importance of its message is too lightly esteemed and valued. It is the love story of Christ, giving to the world a vision of the Savior of men.

Another way in which God gives men a vision of Christ is through His people, who are his representatives upon earth. Jesus said: "Ye are the light of the world." He also said: "Ye are my witnesses." Although Jesus is not walking among men in His divine personality, he is here in the lives of His people. That person who does not have in the circle of his acquaintance some person or persons in whose appearance, conduct or words he can see or hear something which reminds him of Jesus, is extremely unfortunate. True it is that, compared to the great number of professing christians, there are so few whose lives reflect or reveal Jesus Christ; but no doubt, every person, who will lay aside harsh and unjust criticism, knows some person, or, in some instances, many persons whose lives reflect Christ. There are still some in almost every community whose lives are a rebuke to sin in all its forms, and a benediction to all that is good and worthy.

Last, but by no means least, God reveals Jesus to men by the agency of the Holy Spirit. The office of the Holy

Spirit is too little understood and appreciated. Jesus said: "He shall take of mine, and shew it unto you." He also said: "He shall glorify me," and "He will reprove the world of sin, and of righteousness and judgment." The Holy Spirit has come, and is in the world, faithfully presenting to the hearts of men the need of salvation and the offers of Christ. He constantly attends to the ministry of God's word, and goes from heart to heart, knocking for admittance. It is he who moves upon men in a mighty way, until, under the preaching of the Gospel, conviction seizes and pulses start. Of this time and experience the poet appropriately sings:

"Say not 'tis thy pulses beating.
'Tis thy heart of sin.
'Tis thy Savior knocks and crieth;
Rise and let Him in."

Results of the Heavenly Vision

The first result of a vision which may be justly characterized a "heavenly vision" is a revelation of self. A heavenly vision is like holding before the individual a great and perfect mirror, in which, if he looks, he will see himself just as he is. The pictures which God gives men of themselves are not like those of the photographer, which have all imperfections removed and every unsightly feature corrected, but like that reflected in a perfect mirror, when we see ourselves exactly as we are.

When Isaiah had a heavenly vision it reflected his own sinfulness so minutely that he cried out: "Woe is me! for I am undone; because I am a man of unclean lips, and I dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips: for mine eyes have seen the King, the Lord of hosts," Isa. 6: 5.

Alongside of the vision of self, the unregenerated man gets a vision of sin, for he cannot see himself without seeing his sin. Men cannot see themselves in the searching light of a heavenly vision and not behold their sins.

Sin, as seen in the light of a heavenly vision, is not of two kinds, but is seen from two view points. The first vision is that which comes to unregenerated man, and is of actual or committed sin. Without any particular philosophy as to the cause of his transgressions, man's sins roll up at great mountains before him. In the searching light which streams down his past he sees his life as one panorama, and every sin committed seems to arise and condemn him. As if by a supernatural power the immortal memory seems to be quickened, and lays down its every guilt at the feet of the transgressor. Some of you have experienced this awful state of heart and mind, and have witnessed others experiencing it. Having once known this experience, one does not think strangely of Isaiah for crying: "Woe is me," or of others who demonstrate the abhorrence of their hearts in a similar manner. Oh the need of heavenly visions, to cause men to see themselves as God sees them!

Well do I remember the result of the heavenly vision upon my own soul, when, as a little lad of eleven years, I saw my sinful heart. Never shall I forget seeing others who, under the influence of the Gospel message, saw themselves in the heavenly light. The experience I am delineating is not an imaginary one, but one which is intensely real to many hearts.

The other aspect of sin is that of inherited evil, or the depravity of human nature. Sooner or later, that soul who walks in the light of God, realizes that, back of his actual or committed sin, there was a cause. He discovers that,

while his transgressions have all been pardoned, and as a result of his conversion, he has been able to live measureably victorious over sin, still the fountain of his life has not been purified, or the tree has not been entirely changed in its nature. Very soon he realizes that the very cause of evil thought, evil word and evil deed must be removed, or he is destined to defeat.

The vision of sin is a black and discouraging one. Were we compelled to stop here the message would be pessimistic indeed. Alongside of the vision of sin, both committed and inherited, will be placed a vision of Christ. God forbid that we should ever paint before men the awful picture of sin, without painting alongside of it a picture of grace. In the hour of darkest soul anguish, a voice came to Paul out of the heavenly light saying: "I am Jesus."

A vision of Christ is a vision for forgiveness. He came to save sinners, and the forgiveness of sins is specifically stipulated in the atonement of merit. See Eph. 1:7, and Col. 1:14. Forgiveness of sins is a real and wonderful experience. Forgiveness was symbolized by the scape-goat. It was upon the day of atonement that the high priest, having offered for himself and his family, a sin offering, took a goat and slew it, and sprinkled the blood upon the mercy seat. Returning to the door of the tabernacle where another goat was standing, he confessed the sins of the people over it, laying his hands upon it, transferring to it, ceremoniously, the guilt of the people. Having done this, the goat was driven into the desert, never to be seen again, being thus sent into oblivion. This is the symbol of forgiveness, and the very phraseology from which the student gets his word for forgiveness. So when God, for Christ's sake, forgives sins, they are sent away into oblivion, never to be seen again. Not only are they forgiven, but forgotten.

A vision of Christ is also a vision of sanctification or cleansing. Christ came not only to bring forgiveness for man's committed sin, but to sanctify or purify the natures of men. In the atonement a stipulation is made for the sanctification of men's hearts. See Heb. 13:12; Eph. 5:25-27, etc. Christ came not to remove the symptoms of man's disease of sin only, but the very disease itself. He came not merely to sweeten the issues of men's lives, but to purify the very fountain head. The atonement merit reaches to the extent that sin has affected man. Alongside of a vision of sin committed is a vision of forgiveness. Alongside of a vision of sin inherited is a vision of sanctification. No vision is complete or truly heavenly, which does not stand alongside of every human need of divine remedy.

Results of Obedience to the Heavenly Vision.

Drawing our conclusions from the life of the great apostle, the results of obedience to the heavenly vision stand out very conspicuously.

A changed heart is the first thing in evidence, resulting in a changed attitude to things about him. "What wilt thou have me to do," is the language with which he addressed himself to his new task and new Master. A stubborn heart was subdued by the heavenly vision, and all the world was changed about him.

A changed conduct was the natural outflow of a changed heart. So persistently had Paul persecuted the followers of Christ that his name was known in far-away cities. Even the disciple at Damascus, whose name was Ananias and to whom Paul was sent, had to be assured of a change in the attitude of Saul, by the Lord, who said to him, concerning Saul: "Behold, he prayeth." No more

radical change could be imagined. Once he was a persecutor of the followers of Christ; he now becomes a follower, himself. Once he sought to work havoc with the faith of man; he now becomes a defender of the faith. Once he despised the Gospel of Christ; he now becomes a preacher of the same Gospel. Blessed results, indeed, of obedience to the heavenly vision!

Another result of Paul's obedience to the heavenly vision was a martyr's life. Imitating his Lord, Paul seeks not his own comfort and ease, but labor and service. Beaten with rods, with scourges, being stoned, carrying always in his body the marks of the Lord Jesus, he preaches the Gospel, establishes churches and writes epistles. He not only lives the life of a martyr, but, after being arrested, falsely accused and unjustly condemned, he was permitted to die a martyr's death. As he approached Nero's beheading block he caught a glimpse, by faith, of the heavenly reward, and sent back to us the soul-inspiring testimony: "I am now ready to be offered, and the time of my departure is at hand. I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith: Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give me at that day: and not to me only, but unto them also that love his appearing," II Tim. 4:6-8.

Results of Disobedience to the Heavenly Vision.

As we review the results of obedience to the heavenly vision in Paul's remarkable life, we cannot refrain from raising the question what the results would have been, had Paul been disobedient to the heavenly vision. This inquiry should be made first in relation to himself, then in relation to others.

In relation to himself, disobedience to the heavenly

vision would have meant the continuation of his mad career, the persecuting and destroying of the church. It would have meant a life of shame and failure, instead of blessing and success. It would have meant the loss of the crown of glory, which is the reward of the faithful, and the loss of heaven with all that an eternal heaven means. Loss, incalculable loss, to the individual who disobeys the heavenly vision!

Much as disobedience to the heavenly vision would have meant to Paul, himself, it would have meant more in relation to others. Here we stagger at the consequence of a possible disobedience.

Perhaps few realize the important place the writings of St. Paul fill in the New Testament. Thirteen, and probably Hebrews, making fourteen of the twenty-seven books were written by St. Paul. Not counting the book of Hebrews, almost two fifths of the New Testament came from his inspired pen. It is not only the quantity of his writings which gives Paul such an important place; but God used him to shape the theology of the New Testament, or, in other words, to define for his own and all future generations the doctrine of God.

Great writer and theologian as Paul was, this was not his whole task. He was not merely a theorist, but the greatest missionary the world ever had, except Christ. Perseveringly and unwaveringly he carried the Gospel into the regions beyond. With undaunted courage and unfaltering faith he pursued his labors. When the call came: "Come over into Macedonia and help us," he answered the call. Perhaps few realize that we owe the Gospel which we have to Paul's obedience to the heavenly vision. He carried the Gospel over into Europe, where it was handed down to successive generations, and finally brought to

America by our ancestors, who were Europeans. Consider what disobedience to the heavenly vision, on the part of Paul, would have meant to us—no Gospel. This is an illustration of how the obedience or disobedience of one man will multiply for good or evil, down the centuries.

Though we may not become great as Paul, disobedience to the heavenly vision involves the same for ourselves, and our relation to others. To disobey the heavenly vision means, for ourselves, the loss of all that is noble and worthy in this life, and, in the next world, the loss of our souls and heaven. But like Paul, we hold in our hands the destinies of generations unborn. Man neither lives to himself, nor dies to himself. Long, long after we have left this world the results of our obedience or disobedience will be traveling down the years, ever cumulating, either blessing or cursing humanity. As men will rise in the judgment and bless St. Paul because he was not disobedient unto the heavenly vision, so may they arise and bless us because we too obeyed the vision and call of God.

CHAPTER XI

FOXES THAT SPOIL THE VINES

"Take us the foxes, the little foxes, that spoil the vines; for our vines have tender grapes." Songs of Solomon 2:15.

Once upon a time a certain man planted a vineyard with the choicest of vines. He attended to his vineyard as only a good husbandman could, looking forward with pleasant anticipation for an abundance of luscious fruit.

Gradually he found that despite his best attention his vines were being materially hindered in growth and fruitage. Upon investigation he found that sly foxes were feeding upon the tender branches, and immediately built a fence about the vineyard. Still the vines were hindered in growth, and the fruitage was unsatisfactory. Tiny foxes had found the small openings and were imitating their elders in feeding upon the tender vines.

The church of Christ is the vineyard; His people are the vines of divine planting. Satan, the adversary of men and God has turned loose his destroying agencies both large and small to destroy God's vineyard, dwarfing the growth and despoiling the fruitage. This is the interpretation of my text.

Whenever a serious thinking Christian sees one of God's vineyards without proper growth and fruitage, he begins to make inquiry as to the cause of the difficulty. There are no effects without corresponding causes. That the church of Christ in many places has not been enjoying spiritual growth and bearing spiritual fruitage as it should have will scarcely be disputed by any candid man or woman. By the church of Christ I do not mean any particular

denomination, but the people who represent Christ's kingdom among men, in the largest sense. It has been mine to detect if possible a few sly foxes which have been spoiling the vines, and to raise a cry against their impositions. This I am humbly seeking to do at this time.

The Fox of Prayerlessness.

This is one of the cunning little fellows against which we need to guard. The advice of Jesus, "watch and pray that ye enter not into temptation," is not heeded, and the command to pray without ceasing is almost forgotten. Too frequently are secret closets abandoned; and the good old fashioned family worship is almost a thing of the past. When such is the condition it is lamentable indeed.

Prayer is talking to God and is the Divinely appointed means of obtaining the supply for our spiritual needs. It is the button which we press which brings the electrical current of heavenly power to our souls. To fail to pray, and to pray much, is practically to cut off our resources of God's help and means that we become spiritual dwarfs or pigmies, instead of strong stalwart Christians; that we remain weaklings, unfitted for leadership in the church of Christ, instead of patterns of piety and examples of Godliness for the home, the church and the community. Earnest, faithful intercession links the Christian on to the inexhaustible supply of Heaven's power, and is the secret of intimate relationship with God, and of the accomplishing of great things in Christian service. The men of all ages who have accomplished great things for God have been men of prayer. They have been men who imitated their Lord, who when on earth spent nights in prayer, and whose locks were many times wet with the dews of an all night intercassion upon the mountain side.

Symptoms of prayerlessness are, absenting ones-self from prayer meeting, hesitancy in volunteering to offer prayer when volunteer prayers are called for, refusing to pray when called upon and general spiritual weakness. Persons who manifest these symptoms are generally persons who do not pray much in secret, and scarcely ever, if at all, around a family prayer altar. It should not be understood, that long, public prayers are evidences of genuine piety and of a life of secret devotion, for sometimes long and dry public prayers prove the opposite. Some pray so little in secret that it takes them a long time to pray up, when given opportunity to pray publicly. Leaders of public services do not object to long prayers in the secret closet, but have occasion to wish that many of the long prayers offered in public had been confined there. Neither should earnest and faithful intercessors be intimidated, who are often tried over their own public ministries. We should distinguish between long prayers, and dry, lifeless prayers.

Some years ago, when but a young convert, a Christian gentleman of maturer experience pressed my hand in his and uttered two words. These two words contained a world of advice, and have meant more to me than I can express. The words were: "Pray much." Although I did not then fully realize what a treasure had been conveyed to me in this bit of advice, I now know that whatever success has attended my Christian life or service, it has only been in the measure that this advice was heeded. I almost tremble, now, when I review the dangerous places through which my path lead, when but a young lad, working among strangers, and exposed to all kinds of temptations. One misstep would have turned the whole course of life, and ruined my soul. By placing my feeble hand in His great loving hand, my feet were kept from stumbling.

I never ceased to pray. Many times I fell asleep, while on my knees praying at my bedside, and would wake sometime during the night and retire. Praying like that may appear uninteresting and dry, but God understood, and from a boy of fourteen or fifteen years of age, compelled to perform the labour of a grown man until his body was worn out, accepted the will for the act, and answered the prayer for keeping.

Taking into account for ourselves how little time some spend in prayer, how frequently they absent themselves from prayer-meeting, is there any wonder that some are fretful little occupants of cradles, when they should be full-grown members or probably fathers and mothers in the Church? The measure of our prayerlessness will mark the measure of our weakness. A prayerless life will be a powerless life. A prayerless church will be a lifeless and powerless church, with a small and imperfect fruitage, regardless of its divine planting years ago.

Let us drive out the fox of prayerlessness, repair again to our secret closets, and rebuild the family altars which have fallen into decay!

The Fox of Worldly Amusements.

A little fox which crept into the vineyard soon after its planting, and which has grown large and old, and is surrounded with an ever increasing brood of growing, little foxes, is the fox of worldly amusements. There is possibly no other thing which so slyly does its work of despoiling the tender vines, as this fox.

The theatre, by its foolish, immoral plays is doing incalculable harm. The marriage relation is treated in almost all theatrical plays as a joke; and the home, the pillar of civilization is being undermined. Divorces are increasing

at such a rapid rate, in our country, that unless the tide is checked, every other marriage will be annulled. Much of this increase in divorces can be traced to the theatre, with its poisoning influence.

Suicides and murders are increasing. Although there are many other contributing causes for the increasing suicides and murders, some of them are traceable directly or indirectly to the immoral play. Many crimes, such as robbery, etc., have been inspired by the moving picture shows, and have been traced directly to them by the courts.

Both the theatres and moving picture shows are beyond redemption, and should not be patronized by Christians. Neither of them can be operated on even a moral basis; for should they be, they would not receive sufficient patronage to support them. Edwin Booth attempted to operate a moral theatre in New York City. He spent a million or more; his theatre failed, and the building was sold for a ware-house.

Then I have made no mention of the shows, base-ball games, fairs, races, Sunday parks, celebrations, etc., which claim so much attention of professed Christians. More than this, many of the churches are given over very largely to show and amusements. It is with a blush of shame that I acknowledge the fact, that churches are now being built with billiard tables and pool rooms in them. Card parties are very common. Both the world and the church have gone amusement mad. My, what will the harvest be, with all this being done in the name of religion!

Many a young man has taken his first step toward the gambling dive, and many a young girl has started toward the brothel and a life of shame in the card party or parlor dance, in some professedly Christian home. More than one betrayed, fallen and dying girl has told this story which is

sad but true. In numerous instances the so-called amusements prove nothing less than gambling. It is just as sinful to play a game of cards for a gold cup as a gold dollar.

How can we as Christians lend any encouragement to such a system as I have vaguely outlined? To do so would be ruinous to ourselves and others.

The fox of worldly amusements with its detestable brood will rob us of the following valuable things:

1. Precious time which should be spent in the study of the Bible, to pious devotion, and to the discharge of Christian duties.

2. Money which should be spent in advancing the interests of the Lord's kingdom, and in making for ourselves comfortable homes, in anticipation of a rainy or adverse day.

3. Energy and interest for the Lord's cause, which, sooner or later, will result in an abandonment of even our profession of religion, our joy of salvation having long since departed. He who finds it necessary to supplement his religion with such worldly amusements confesses that his is not the religion of the Bible. The whole-hearted Christian has neither time, money, nor disposition for such things.

The fox of worldly amusements is not imaginary; it is real. Let us detect him and cast him out of the vineyard of our lives. Let us not go anywhere that we cannot ask the blessed Holy Spirit to accompany us, nor where we would not want to be found if Jesus should come.

The Fox of Indulgence.

By indulgence I mean permitting ourselves to engage in practices and habits which do not bear the careful scrutiny of good judgment, nor the word of God, but are passed by sometimes lightly.

It is almost needless for me to detain upon the question of intemperance, as we are all agreed upon the sinfulness of this habit. The one habit which has such a firm grip on so many is the use of tobacco. We seem to have closed our eyes to the fact that fifteen thousand lives is the price which we pay annually for its use, besides the fearful expenditure of money which is worse than thrown into a mud-hole. We seem to have forgotten that we are weakening our own mental powers and are handing down to our children, for three or four generations, physical, mental and moral weaknesses, as a result of the use of the narcotic, commonly called tobacco.

My dear parents, you have no reasonable nor moral right to expect of your boys, your sons or sons-in-law, a clean life beyond the measure of your example.

Some little time ago, a father, who humbly confessed to me this lack of progress in Divine life, because of this habit, told me that his oldest son about fourteen years of age had already begun the habit of smoking. After telling me that he had threatened him with a severe whipping, should he be found guilty again, continued by saying: "After all, I can scarcely punish the child for doing the very thing which I practice myself." His conclusion was logical. I do not justify the action of the son, but insist upon proper example as well as proper precept from the father.

I have only ever met a single person who denied the use of tobacco as being a filthy habit. Of filthy things, Paul says: "Cleanse yourselves." Has the husband a right to demand of the wife a higher standard of cleanliness than that which he practices? Yet few husbands would tolerate a tobacco chewing and spitting wife. I meet but a few persons who deny the uselessness of the habit; and yet professing Christians continue to spend the Lord's money for

a filthy, needless thing. To such the prophet's question: "Why do ye spend your money for that which is not bread?" should be asked frequently.

Listening to a conversation some time ago, I learned that a certain man, whom I know, uses two five-cent packages of chewing tobacco, daily, besides a frequent smoke. Just a little application of mathematics discloses that, at this rate, seventy cents is expended weekly, or thirty-six dollars and forty cents annually for chewing, only. In twenty-five years, during which time this man has been using tobacco, he has spent the amount of $910.00, which if properly expended would have purchased a fairly good property, a modest home. My brethren, how can we justify ourselves in engaging in such practices—spending the Lord's money, to the injury of our bodies, our families, our intellects and our souls?

The statistics of a certain college indicate that no tobacco user ever stood at the head of his class in that institution of learning. The possibilities are seriously against the boy who engages in the use of tobacco. His mental faculties become impaired; his physical development is arrested, and morally or spiritually he is dead. He is a dwarf or pigmy in every sense of the word. This is a sly fox, but is in the vineyard and is spoiling the vines. Christians should not only abstain from the use of tobacco, but wash their hands from the abominable traffic in every way.

Before leaving this, let me speak a message of courage to such who desire to be freed from the awful grip of this habit. It is confessed to be a difficult task, but Christ promises divine help to such who seek it. I have known several persons who discontinued the habit and were delivered almost instantaneously from the appetite in answer

to prayer. This often comes after a hard struggle. There is a cure which excels all others; it is the blood cure.

A certain minister told me, only a few days ago, that his father used tobacco until he—his first-born son came into the world. Looking into the face of his innocent child he said: "How can I longer continue this habit? For the sake of my child, if for none other, I will quit at once." This he did, and deliverance from the appetite came in answer to prayer.

The Fox of Fault Finding or Evil Speaking.

The scriptures teach that we shall confess our own faults to one another; but I am ignorant of any adomonition that we shall confess the faults of others, either to themselves or to any one else. "Speak not evil of another" is the New Testament correction against this error. Evil speaking, like a small avalanche upon the mountain side, increases ever as it progresses downward until the consequences are disastrous. I am quite sure that speaking evil against any person, regardless of who that person may be, does no good to the person concerning whom the evil is spoken, and cannot benefit the one speaking. Unkind words, thoughtless words often lead to bitter strife, which scarcely has an end.

Criticisms of others who speak, who sing, who play or who pray should be superseded by kind regards and best wishes, also a sense of appreciation of their willingness to do their best. This little fox, when permitted to have his way, can break up a church into wrangling and jealousy; reduce religious service to the commonplace, and make a prayer-meeting a disappointment. Let us see well to it that this sly little trouble maker be detected and barred.

Conversation of a light, foolish or chaffy nature will

also rob the soul of its consciousness of the Lord's favor and smiles, leaving emptiness and unrest. This is the frequent result of social gatherings, which are usually looked upon as harmless. Light or foolish talking (not obscene nor profane language) is the *little* fox which has gained entrance into many vineyards, and is doing its work of devastation.

There is another type of evil speaking which stands in a class by itself. It is that of tattling or tale bearing, and has been the cause of incalculable trouble and sorrow. The tattler is professedly everybody's confident and, in reality the confident of none. He or she goes about saying: "Did you hear, did you hear?" If the person addressed is innocent of having "heard" the tale is told, with the special and emphatic admonition that no one else be told. Evidently there is one of two reasons why the admonition is given not to tell: Either the report is false; or the tattler desires to reserve for himself or herself the opportunity of telling the rest. Tales of tattlers have the mysterious faculty for increasing, and never grow less.

This spirit of evil speaking and fault-finding grows until no good can be seen in others. Like the woman who persistently declared her neighbor's wash was greasy and streaked, but later discovered that the streaks were upon her own window panes; so tattlers and fault-finders, by a process of optical illusion, see the faults and failures of others, instead of their own.

The Fox of Improper Companionship

Another cunning despoiler of the tender vines of the vineyard is the fox of improper companionship. I do not now say the fox of "evil" companionship, although that is implied, for that epithet might be resented. There is an old adage which says: "Birds of a feather flock together."

There is another which declares that a person is known by the company he keeps. This is unalterably true. Persistence in companionship of a quality other than that possessed by both parties will result in a change in one or the other. Even the strongest can not resist the influence and effect of improper companionship.

The practices, habits and desires of the individual who becomes a Christian become the opposite of those of the unsaved person; and the individual—man or woman, boy or girl who desires to make success of Christian life should break off unsaved companionship at once. By this the mistreatment of friends is not meant, but a proper recognition of the law of companionship and its results. Whether it be the society or companionship of the gambler, the drunkard, the profane, the society lover or gay, with whom we formerly associated, such companionship should be broken, when we become Christians. Many a man has gone back to his cards and drink because he did not sever former companionship. Many young men and women have gone back to the giddy rounds and pleasures of the world because they did not, at once, forsake the companionship of those who engage in such things.

This fox finds his easiest prey to be the tender vines—the young people. This is probably due to the unsettled relations and social instincts of the young. Mistakes and blunders made in relation to companionship is farther reaching and more lamentable in the cases of the young. This danger can scarcely be over emphasized, as upon proper companionship depends the happiness and success of our young people, and the prosperity of the church as well.

Sometimes young people who are Christians persist in keeping the company of unsaved companions, even to the marriage relation. This is without question a mistake,

and the cause of many unhappy families. Many young women have awakened to this only after it was too late. Love is often blind to these facts, and deaf to advice in regards to the same, and sometimes only realizes the blunder when there is no remedy.

One of the most frequent illustrations of the results of improper companionship are those of Christian girls who accept the company of unsaved young men. Often the result is a loss of Christian experience, and naturally indifference to religious things follows. In not a few cases the results are a loss of virtue, and a life of shame.

So subtle is this fox of improper companionship that he employs shrewd tactics. If the unsaved or irreligious young man discovers that the Christian girl, whose company he seeks, cannot be turned aside from her Christian life and duties, he too becomes religious; comes to the altar; lays aside his cigar or pipe, and joins the church of which she is a member. He comes to church with her, and the case is won. Scarcely has the brief honeymoon begun, until he commences to lose interest in religious matters and soon goes back to his evil practices—the pipe, the cards or the saloon. The young woman awakes to her mistake, but it is too late. I have known faithful pastors who tenderly and persistently opposed such marriages, but without avail. May the dear Lord open our eyes to the evils of improper companionship. Beware of that person who becomes interested in religion and the church, for the sake of securing an end—that of companionship. Such should be given ample opportunity to prove their genuineness without prospect or promise of anything except the rewards of the faithful.

Before leaving this subject, attention need only be called to the fact that improper relations, in a business way,

has proven to be the downfall of many good-meaning men. Business practices are so corrupt in this evil age that great care must be observed on the part of the Christian. The apostle's advice and command: "Be ye not unequally yoked together with unbelievers," II Cor. 6:14, is applicable to all phases of the question of companionship.

The Fox of Lodgeism.

In many parts of the vineyard this one-time, sly little fellow is found to have become monstrous in size and can not now be treated as a little fox. My brethren, I have been of the conviction for some time that secret, oath-bound societies and pure and unadulterated religion cannot thrive well together. A careful and unprejudiced investigation has confirmed my conviction. The one is promoted at the expense of the other, and it rests with us to choose between the two—the promotion of a Holy religion, or of oath-bound societies.

Permit me to preface my further statements by saying, that I believe I have a right to claim that I make but few statements which have not been well weighed, and consequently, am only thankful for correction, if a single conclusion is false. Should the statement of honest conviction and truth cost me the friendship of one of my friends, I must pay the price, for I must obey God rather than man. I am a friend to all men, although I can not feel friendly to anything which hinders men in their spiritual progress in divine life.

After careful investigation, calm deliberation and prayerful consideration, I have decided upon the following reasons why oath-bound societies are detrimental to the Christian religion, and why Christians should not belong to them.

1. The oath itself is unscriptural for Jesus says: "Ye have heard that it hath been said by them of old time, Thou shalt not forswear thyself, but shalt perform unto the Lord thine oaths: But I say unto you, Swear not at all; neither by heaven; for it is God's throne: Nor by the earth; for it is his footstool: neither by Jerusalem; for it is the city of the great king. Neither shalt thou swear by thy head, because thou canst not make one hair white or black. But let your communication be Yea, yea; Nay, nay: for whatsoever is more than these cometh of evil." Matt. 5:33-37.

2. It is unsafe to highest interests and contrary to good judgment to take an oath that we will not reveal a thing which has not already been revealed to us. Further, secret, oath-bound societies are a menace to good government, as by them guilty persons are shielded from punishment of their crimes. Any system or society which shelters persons from the penalties of violated law, which others who are not members must suffer, is a dangerous thing for any country. This is one of the well-known evil results of the oath-bound, secret society.

3. Because not only the fact of the oaths but the nature of the oaths which attend the joining of oath-bound societies, and taking various degrees are frequently unchristian in their nature. What do you think of an oath which closes as follows: "To all which I do most solemnly promise and swear, with a fixed and steady purpose of mind in me, to keep and perform the same, binding myself under no less penalty than to have my body severed in two, in the midst and divided to the north and south, my bowels burnt to ashes in the center and the ashes scattered before the four winds of heaven, that there might not the least track or trace of remembrance remain among men—

of so vile and perjured a wretch as I should be, were I ever to prove willfully guilty of violating any part of this solemn oath or obligation — — — —"? Masters' Degree.

What do you think of the moral teaching of the following: "Furthermore, do I promise and swear, that I will not violate the chastity of a Master Mason's wife, mother, sister or daughter, I knowing them to be such, nor suffer it to be done by others, if in my power to prevent it"? Where is even the morality of an oath which protects the chastity of the wives and daughters of any lodge, but makes no requirements for the chastity of other wives and daughters? Using the language of a Methodist Presiding Elder, who himself is a member of a well-known secret society, and whose words should count, "The morals taught by secret, oath-bound societies are sham morals only."

The above quoted oath may be denied by some, and declared by others to be only characteristic of one secret society, but it illustrates the nature of the various oaths.

Here some person may place a question mark and ask how I know the nature of these oaths, having never taken them. To this question, my only reply necessary at this time is, that I know that the nature of the various oaths, and can prove the same should it be necessary to do so.

4. Because the joining of a secret, oath bound society is the breaking of the marriage vow, the sacred marriage vow which declares, "forsaking all others I will cleave unto her until death shall separate us." Joining a secret, oath-bound society is to break that vow, by taking some other persons into a relationship, which dare not be revealed even unto the bosom companion. I ask you, friends, is there any wonder that divorces are on the increase, and will continue to increase as long as husbands continue to put oaths

between themselves and their wives, and wives in turn continue to put oaths between themselves and their husbands? Daniel Webster, speaking from a logical and legal standpoint, and not a religious, once said: "No married man has any right to connect himself with any oath-bound society, for by doing so he is violating his marriage vow."

5. Secret Societies rob the church of energy, interest and support which are rightfully hers. Many a minister has been left to struggle against the currents of evil alone, and to conduct services to bring men to Christ, while the members of his church, and sometimes members of his official board, were absenting themselves to prove themselves loyal to their secret society circles. This fact is no exaggeration—I know it to be true. More than one member of the church has objected to definite plans for systematic giving, while he was supporting by a definite system, the secret society of which he was a member. Many a man has absented himself from the prayer meeting and other services under the pretext of various excuses, while at the same time a faithful attendant at lodge gatherings. Prayer meetings have been abandoned largely to the women and children. When women's lodges become as numerous and as prosperous as those of the men, there will be no prayer meetings at all.

My brethren, can the church of Jesus Christ prosper while its own members thus give it a second place in their hearts, their interests and their means; preferring a secret society instead? He who is thoroughly saved and will keep saved, by walking in the light, will not be overcome with the temptation to lodge joining; and he who having become a Christian, finds himself connected with such unholy alliance will soon sever his connection. It will become foreign indeed to such.

6. One more reason why Christians should abominate the oath-bound society is because of its shameful and disgusting initiating. It would seem as though sober and respectable men would not submit to the requirements of the customary initiation. Using the language of the Apostle Paul, "it is a shame even to speak of those things which are done of them in secret" Eph. 5:12. Strange as it may seem, when once duped, men acquiesce and seem willing to help dupe others. Occasionally the results of such unchristian and inhuman treatment, as is administered in the initiative rights, prove fatal to life; and yet professing Christians and ministers lend themselves to such systems. It is a burlesque on religion. Men, the lodge is a sworn enemy of the church, and we cannot serve both God and the devil. "Choose ye this day whom ye will serve."

I am pleased to say that I am not alone in the discovery that the secret, oath-bound society is one of the foxes which is despoiling the spiritual growth and fruitage of individual lives and of the church. Many great and good men like D. L. Moody, Dr. Dixon, W. G. Morehead and many others agree fully in these conclusions. The Moody church of Chicago has never had a pastor who did not openly oppose secret, oath-bound societies.

Dear Brethren and Friends: I am convinced beyond doubt that the more one becomes acquainted with the gentle Saviour who said: "I ever spake openly, in secret have I said nothing" the less we desire association and relation with societies behind curtains and locked doors and penalty-bound oaths. We will exert our energies to win men for Christ instead of oath-bound societies.

The Fox of Pride.

When I have told on one more sly fox I will be through. It is the fox of pride. Pride manifests itself in

various ways, and the Lord declares that He despises even a proud look.

While it is possible to be as proud as a peacock while in a formal and plain cut dress, yet pride is more readily manifested in extravagant and costly dress, and in needless ornamentation than in any other way. While the temptation seems to be stronger to the gentler sex, it is yielded to by both men and women.

Should you entertain any criticism against mention of the dress question, I will be obliged to ask you to direct your criticism against the Bible, because it is responsible for my knowledge of how Christians should dress. The Bible is my text book, and if the Lord saw it necessary to give space to the treatment of the dress question within the limited spaces and precious pages of the New Testament, I, as His minister should not consider it beneath my dignity to mention it.

No, it is my Christian, ministerial duty.

Here are the instructions: "I will therefore that men pray everywhere, lifting up holy hands, without wrath and doubting. In like manner also, that women adorn themselves in modest apparel, with shamefacedness and sobriety; not with braided hair, or gold, or pearls or costly array; but (which becometh women professing godliness) with good works." 1st Tim. 2:8-10. Also "Whose adorning let it not be that outward adorning of plaiting the hair, and of wearing of gold, or of putting on of apparel; but let it be the hidden man of the heart in that which is not corruptible, even the ornament of a meek and quiet spirit, which is in the sight of God of great price." 1st Peter 3:3-5. Here no one is asked to dress tastelessly and untidily, but to refrain from extravagant and costly dressing and from artificial ornamentation. Women are especially addressed,

doubtless because of their weakness along these lines. It would be unfair that God should make requirements of women which He did not make of men—this is not the intention of these scriptures.

It is evident, however, that the church of all ages has accepted this teaching relative to dress. The true church and true members of the church still accept and practice it. The Methodist Church, in her discipline, refers to these scriptures and urges their obedience. The United Brethren Church, The Mennonite Church and in fact practically all evangelical churches lay down these scriptural rules for their members. I am sorry that so many of us are so untrue to our own churches, and, what is more, to our Bibles.

Friends, we cannot plead innocence or ignorance when we know God's requirements. Does not this command carry with it as much authority as the command "Thou shalt not steal"? Did not the same God speak both of them? Will He condemn us for disobeying the one, and not the other? Have I any right to ignore the one command and not the other? By no means. Possibly you have heard similar messages on previous occasions, but I leave it for you to decide whether you have obeyed, or not. It is not my opinion, my notion, my desire to have any one conform to my ideas, it is God who has spoken the above commands.

The time has evidently come when ministers have ceased to do their duty and scientists have begun to speak along these lines. Dr. Max Baff, of Clark College, Worchester, Mass., recently said: "Women have evidently not outgrown the savage customs of personal adornment; they have probably retrograded. Among savages, like the American Indian for example, both sexes indulge in wearing feathers, painting themselves and attaching rings and useless ornaments to their persons. Look at the woman of

today. She loves to wear feathers, stuffed bodies of dead birds, even of barnyard fowls that lack the esthetic suggestion of the forests and bring to mind only the butcher shop. She pierces her ears that she may hang bits of gold and gleaming stones there; she wears rings and bracelets and necklaces. Again, she wears her hair long, arranged in fantastic shapes, oftentimes made even more grotesque by artificial means. As for painting her face—that is something that everybody knows."

Too true, is it not? Should you ask me why these conditions exist, it is all spelled out in one word, "pride." Women are not alone in this fault, as husbands often desire them to thus adorn and decorate their bodies by artificial means, and young men have impressed young womanhood that this is their requirement. The trouble lies in the proud hearts of both sexes.

I am glad that there is a remedy. The remedy is the blood cure. A new heart, a clean heart, a humble heart will settle this question reasonably and scripturally. It will also improve materially the appearance of men and women, for of the Lord, the Psalmist declares. "He will beautify the meek with salvation." Psalms 149:4. Salvation has a physiological effect upon people. It gives a beauty which cannot be effaced or erased by rain or tear drops. Artificial beauty is not even "skin deep," simply paint and powder deep. The beauty resulting from salvation is a result of a pure heart and a clean life, and is deep seated as life itself. The people of the Lord are the most beautiful people in all the world, and I am willing to have them compared with the theatre or circus crowd at any time. To that person who is beautified with salvation, the most costly jewels and expensive ornaments would appear very cheap and shoddy.

Isaiah tells in his prophecy of a people who say: "Prophecy not unto us right things, speak unto us smooth things." While I have not prophesied smooth things, I am closing with the feeling that I have prophesied right things. More than this, I feel confident that there are some people who do not desire smooth things in preference to right things; and that you choose that I should be true to my mission, and for your sakes as well as my own, speak the truth without fear or favor.

Let us awake to the disaster which is being wrought by these sly foxes, and bar them completely from our lives. The absence of fruit in our Christian lives will be as real if little foxes spoil the vines, as if they were destroyed by those or larger growth. Further, as has been noted, when these little foxes are given permission to enter our lives, they soon develop into full-grown enemies of the Lord's vineyard. Whether small or large, they should be taken out and destroyed.

CHAPTER XII

CHRISTIAN STEWARDSHIP

"These ought ye to have done, and not to leave the other undone." Matt. 23:23.

What shall be said upon the subject of Christian Stewardship will be more especially in relation to the tithing system. If the tithing system is scriptural and practical for the church today, it is a much neglected theme. To such who may not care to be awakened and disturbed on this subject, the only apology to be made is, that it is not the mission of the ministry to tell people the things which they *like* to hear, but the things which the Lord desires that they should hear.

The Lord's Claim of Ownership

In the writings of the Psalmist we read: "The earth is the Lord's, and the fulness thereof; the world, and they that dwell therein." Psalms 24:1. In the first epistle to the Corinthians, tenth chapter and twenty-sixth verse, we have this text quoted by the Apostle Paul. Consequently both the Old and New Testaments declare, for the Lord, the ownership of the earth and all that it contains.

The Lord's ownership is based upon the royal right of creation and entitles Him, then, to the following:

The produce or the ground,
The labour of the beast,
The skill of man.

It is evident that, from the earliest, God demanded from man a recognition of His ownership, having made him

the keeper of His vineyard, the tiller of His ground and the Lord of His entire creation. In other words, the Lord furnished the capital with which man was to transact business, and demanded an interest for the use of the same. Waiving the question, at this time, as to what that interest was to be, there could be nothing more reasonable in the world than, that God should demand some such recognition.

God is a reasonable God, and it can be predicted, in advance of our investigation, that it will be found that, in His dealings with man, His terms are exceedingly liberal and His demands the most charitable.

The history of the institution of tithing is, like that of some other things, largely unwritten, but the first recorded recognition of God's claims of ownership, where definite statements are made as to the amount of interest He expects, is that the tithe was given. The word "tithe" means a tenth part, and is translated from the Hebrew word *mah-as-ayr* and the Greek word *dek-at ay.* The Hebrew word is the one used in the Old Testament, and the Greek word the one used in the new Testament, and both mean a tenth.

The Patriarchal Tithe.

The first record of exact amounts paid to God, in recognition of His claims of ownership, was in connection with the patriarchs, and there are evidences that ever since that time God has expected the tithe from His people.

When Abraham organized his servants into an army and made a hurried march, rescuing Lot who had been carried away by the Kings of the North; on his return journey, he met Melchizedek, king of Salem, priest of God. After Melchizedek blessed Abraham, in the name of "God Most High, *possessor of heaven and earth,*" Abraham immediately recognized the claims of that God, in whose name

he had been blessed, and by whom he had conquered, and immediately gave a tithe of the spoils of the recovered goods. Gen. 14:20.

A test of piety in patriarchal times was the faithful payment of the tithe. This fact is illustrated in the case of Jacob.

Having left his father's home, Jacob started for Haran. Night overtook him, and with a stone for his pillow and the heavens for his canopy, he lay down to sleep. While here he had the beautiful vision, which we almost covet. He saw a ladder let down out of heaven, with its base resting upon the earth and its top reaching through the open skies. Angels were ascending and descending upon it, and the Lord stood above it and spoke to him. Whatever other significance this vision may have had, it certainly must have meant that the great chasm which had been made between earth and heaven, by sin, was successfully spanned, and heaven was again accessible to man. When Jacob awakened from his sleep he realized that God had given to him a revelation and had spoken to him, and he declared. "Surely the Lord is in this place. * * * * This is none other than the house of God, and this is the gate of heaven." He then took the stone which he had for his pillow and set it up for a monument. Pouring oil upon the top of it, he named it Bethel, which means, House of God. Then, and there, he made a vow to serve the Lord; and recognizing God's claims upon what he possessed or ever would possess, he said: "Of all that thou shalt give me I will *surely* give the tenth unto thee." Gen. 28:22. Jacob did not wait until his Peniel experience, where his very nature was changed from that of a trickster to that of a holy man, and where his name was also changed from Jacob to Israel in testimony of his change of heart, to recognize God's

claims upon what he had, but vowed to do so from that day, the day of his conversion. Whether or not Jacob always kept this vow we do not know, but sincerely hope he did. The vow which he made when he came face to face with God, however, evidences the fact that paying the tithe to the Lord, in recognition of His ownership, was a test of patriarchal piety. Let such who are inclined to criticize Jacob examine themselves, and see whether their piety excels that of Jacob's in recognizing God's claims.

Mosaic Tithing.

The command of tithing is specifically given in Leviticus 27:30, which says: "And all the tithe of the land, whether of the seed of the land, or of the fruit of the tree, is the Lord's: it is holy unto the Lord. * * * * And all the tithe of the herd or the flock, whatsoever passeth under the rod, the tenth shall be holy unto the Lord."

The tithing system, when incorporated into the law was not a new thing, but was simply a reconstruction of the patriarchal religion. All ages and dispensations have some things in common. There has never been a change of orders or dispensations in which there were not some things carried from the old order or dispensation into the new. So in the change from the Patriarchal age to that of the law, the tithe was carried over; was incorporated into the law, itself, and became a vital part of the new order.

In the Mosaic economy the tithe was evidently paid to God, through the Levites, for their support, so that they might be free to maintain religious worship. So far as we know, the tithe was not appropriated to any other use, not even to the building of places of worship, but to the support of the Levitical ministry, only. Later, when the promised land of Canaan was divided between the twelve

tribes, the tribe of Levi received no portion. God intended that the Levitical ministry should not be bothered with such things as land, farming, stock-raising, horticulture, etc., but that they should devote themselves entirely to their sacred office, and be supported by the tithe of the other tribes.

Besides the paying of the tithe, in the time of the law, there were some other heavy demands and expenses. Religion in those days was quite expensive. The first of the fruits, the first of grain were the Lord's and were to be given to Him. It was unlawful to gather up the heads of grain which were scattered in reaping, but these gleanings were to be left for the poor to gather. Besides these, there were the numerous sacrifices which the law continually demanded. Further, some understood that a second tithe was required by the law for charitable purposes. This view is held by The Popular and Critical Bible Encyclopedia. Whether this second tithe was demanded or not, the other expenses of religion, under the law, made the cost no small consideration. Religion was, then, interesting from the financial view-point.

Hezekiah's Reform.

Under the reign of the wicked kings, Ahaz and others, the tithing system was neglected and religion declined. It may be difficult to determine which was the cause and which the effect, but tithing and religious worship declined together. This decline made it necessary for the priests to extinguish the candles, cease to burn incense, close the doors and leave the temple.

When good king Hezekiah came to the throne he re-established the tithing system, and, as a result of the bringing in of the tithes and offerings, the priests and Levites

were enabled to return to the temple, and again to devote themselves to the services of the Lord. So abundant was the supply, when the people recognized God's claims and brought in the tithe, that additional chambers had to be built to accommodate the large store, and chief stewards, with a number of assistants, had to be appointed to take charge of the same.

After Hezekiah had set the tithing system into operation again, and sent the priests back to the temple to minister in holy things he went to the temple and questioned the priests as to the results. To his questions Azariah, the chief priest, answered and said: "Since the people began to bring the oblations into the house of the Lord, we have eaten and have had enough, and have left plenty: for the Lord hath blessed His people; and that which is left is his great store" 2nd Chron. 31:10.

Nehemiah's Command.

Another testimony of the close relationship of successful religious work and a recognition of God's claims, by systematic giving, or tithing, is found in the command of Nehemiah.

When Nehemiah, who had been carried away with many other Israelites to Babylon, heard the report that the gates of Jerusalem had been broken down and burned, he sat down and wept. Having obtained permission to return to Jerusalem he found that the priests had gone to the field to find employment, because they had not received proper support; religious worship had been practically abandoned, and the portion of the temple formerly used to store the tithe and offerings occupied by a foreigner. Having rebuilt the walls of the city and assembled the people together, instructing them in the law, he also reorganized the

temple service and commanded that the tithe be brought in. This being done, he appointed treasures over the large stores which resulted from the bringing in of the tithes. Neh. 10:37; 13:10-13.

There is probably no record of successful religious effort, in Old Testament times, when the tithes were withheld. As has been noted before, the practice of the tithe and acceptable religious service arose and declined together. God did not, He cannot recognize and worship and service of such who do not recognize His claims upon them.

Malachi's Charge.

The prophecy of Malachi occupies a unique place in the revelation of God. When the echoes of this last messenger of the Old Testament dispensation died away God spake no more to man for the space of four hundred years. It was a period of awful silence.

This prophet propounds the question: "Will a man rob God?" The robbing of a fellowman is a thing indeed very bad; but he answers his own question by saying: "But ye have robbed *me.*" Imagining an effort on the part of the accused to intimidate him by saying: "Wherein have we robbed thee," he declared that "tithes and offerings" were the things of which Israel had robbed God. Mal. 3:8.

He further declares: "Ye are cursed with a curse: for ye have robbed me, even this whole nation" Mal. 3:9. If the withholding of the tithes and offerings, thus refusing to recognize God's claims upon men's property and income, was robbery in Malachi's day, how must the conduct of professing christian men, who fail to scripturally recognize God's claims be looked upon, today? If such conduct brought a "curse" in that day, there is no wonder that God's professed Israel is suffering under a blighting, sting-

ing, withering curse, today, when God's claims are so shamefully slighted, and the day is practicing such false and unscriptural financial systems.

The New Testament Tithe.

Perhaps some one is ready to object to so many references to the Old Testament scriptures, declaring that we have nothing to do with them. "Give us," say they, "New Testament authority."

First, the Old Testament scriptures have more vital concern for us than we sometimes suppose. "The Old Testament is the New *enfolded*: The New Testament is the Old *unfolded*. The Old Testament is the New *concealed*: The New Testament is the Old *revealed*." This indicates the inseparableness of the scriptures.

Further, no moral law has ever been changed, nor ever will be. If the world should stand a billion of years, and a million dispensations be passed through, no moral law, given by God, would ever be repealed. The only possible change which could be made would be in intensity, in accordance with or in keeping with God's revelation of himself. The law of recognizing God's claims is a moral law, based, as we have seen, upon God's ownership, or proprietorship; which, in turn, is based upon His creatorship. He may, if he chooses, emphasize His claims, increasing His demands, but never can, in keeping with His relation to the earth and man, withdraw such claims.

It is to be conceded, however, that no chain of argument is stronger than its weakest link, and if we should fail to find some stamp of New Testament approval upon the law of the tithe, grave suspicions, as to the adaptabiliy of it to the New Testament dispensation, would be justly aroused.

The words of our text: "These ought ye to have done," (Matt. 23:23) refer to the tithing practiced by those addressed, and appear to be a stamp of approval, placed upon the tithing system. Being spoken by Jesus Himself, they constitute a stamp of approval from supreme authority. Although he was addressing a class of people whom he characterized as hypocrites, because of their neglect of other things, He commends them for their faithfulness to the law of the tithe. Even hypocrites receive that which is just, at the hands of the Master. Jesus, instead of excusing these people from the law of the tithe, by telling them that a new dispensation was being inaugurated, plainly and unmistakably declared: "These ye ought to have done."

Another evidence of the law of the tithe having the stamp of New Testament approval upon it is found in the fact, that no other standard is given for the recognition of God's claims; but systematic, regular and definite giving is enjoined. The financial system recommended to the Corinthian church, by Paul, was that *weekly* deposits should be made, into the Lord's treasury. 1st Cor. 16:2. Whether this "laying by" relates to placing an amount into the church offering each Lord's day, or a "laying by" for a less frequent collection, makes no difference; but a regular, systematic giving is required. There is another stipulation made in the requirement, which says that the "laying by" is to be in proportion, "as God hath prospered." Please note the definiteness of giving indicated in the clause: "As God hath prospered." No "left over," no "little to spare," no haphazard giving allowed. How then are they to "lay by"? Hear the answer again: "As God hath prospered." But by what standard of giving we were to be governed? There is only one standard of giving mentioned in both Testaments, and that is the tithe. Since the New Testament does

not repeal the law of the tithe, but puts the stamp of approval upon it; and since it enjoins definite, systematic giving, without suggesting any other system, it is reasonable to conclude that the law of the tithe shall determine the amount to be laid aside, weekly, and in proportion "as God hath prospered." If God has prospered us—giving strength, health and ability to earn ten dollars, one tenth or one dollar is to be laid aside for the Lord's treasury. If the Lord has prospered us twenty dollars, two dollars is the amount due His treasury. What a beautiful, faithful and God-honoring recognition of His claims!

Some one apologizes for his failure to recognize God's claims systematically by saying: "My all have I given to the Lord." True enough, an entire consecration involves the laying of all we have and are at the feet of Jesus for His use and glory; but, as a rule, it is His intention that we shall be stewards over His possessions. While He has a perfect right to demand the entire amount of the capital at any time, what He ordinarily desires is, "faithful stewards." The fact that we confess that all we have belongs to the Lord, does not exempt us, by any means, from a definite and systematic recognition of such claims.

The Tithe the Minimum.

Paying the tithe cannot be properly looked upon as *giving*, at all. It is simply paying a just debt, equal to the rental for another's house in which we live, or the share of grain due another for the use of his land. Giving God less is robbing Him, outright. The "offerings" were left somewhat to the people, and were measured partly by their religious devotion. Yet it was possible to rob God in relation to the free-will "offerings." The tithe is absolutely God's minimum requirement. A land owner furnishes half

the seed, and requires half the increase. Certainly God is liberal when He furnishes every thing, to ask only a tenth.

Recalling the fact that God has required the tithe, even from Patriarchal times, besides the numerous offerings, how can any one ask of Him more lenient terms in this dispensation? God usually requires of men, in keeping with their light. God's revelation of Himself has been progressive; the largest revelation which He has ever made to the world being in the person of His Son. Today we are living in the blazing sunlight of that revelation. Despite this, He still demands the minimum in recognition of His claims—the tithe. The terms of his proprietorship are the same as when faithful Abraham, without law, without prophecy or without the historic Christ, paid to Melchizedek the tithe, and when absconding and tricky Jacob met the Lord and vowed to pay, at least God's required minimum, in recognition of His claims. The surprise is not that God demands, but that He demands so little. Not having changed His terms of proprietorship, still the tithe, it is reasonable that He should expect us, who live in this dispensation, to express our appreciation of our superior privileges by liberality in our free-will "offerings." None should look upon the tithe as sufficient. It is in relation to the "offerings" where latitude is given for the expression of our religious devotion. Since God, in His gift to the world gave the maximum—the greatest possible gift, Jesus Christ, no true christian should think of refusing God the minimum—the tithe, without a blush of shame.

Giving God the Best.

An example of religious devotion in the giving of offerings (not the tithe) is found in the following incident.

A christian gentleman, of my acquaintance and related

to my ministry, was one day, driving his cattle to pasture. Among the members of his herd was a calf rather unpromising. Something seemed to say to him: "Give that calf to the Lord. His blessing upon it will cause it to grow and fatten." Honest in his conviction, he then and there resolved that it should be the Lord's. To his surprise, the calf became leaner and leaner, and after a while, died. God had taught him a lesson. The lesson was that He did not want the lean and sickly calves of his herd. The incident was related to the good wife, and both agreed that the Lord had taught them that He wanted their best. They then decided that all the good coins, regardless of denomination, which came into their possession, should be laid aside for the Lord. They honored the Lord with their best, and God blessed them abundantly.

A Financial Blessing in Tithing.

Some years ago, when delivering a message on Christian Stewardship, there sat in my congregation, a good christian woman whose husband was not saved. Her husband's earnings not coming into her hands, whatever, and she having but a scanty income from produce, had been giving but little to support the Lord's work. She became convinced that tithing was right, and resolved to honor the Lord wih the tithe of her meager income, though she knew that even that would be against her husband's wish. Visiting them a year or two later, she recalled the sermon, and related what she had vowed to do, and what she had been doing; volunteering the information that her beginning to honor the Lord with her small tithe marked the day of better things for them, in their home. They had been having a hard time to clothe and feed their family, but from that time a remarkable change had taken place. God honors for faithfulness even in small things.

The above incident is in keeping with His promise: "Honor the Lord with the first-fruits of all thine increase: so shall thy barns be filled with plenty, and thy presses shall burst out with new wine." Prov. 3:9. There is not the least doubt in my mind but that nine dollars, with the Lord's blessing upon it, will go farther—will buy more clothing and food, and pay more rent and other necessary expenses, than ten dollars without God's blessing upon it. The skeptical may ask: "How can these things be." I do not know whether I can tell "how," but the Lord who took a few loaves and a few small fishes and with them satisfied the hunger of five thousand men, besides women and children, can also bless the remaining nine dollars after He has been honored with the tithe, until it will purchase more than ten dollars selfishly spent, without recognizing His claims. Should the question "how" be still urged, just "how" he satisfied the hunger of a multitude, with five loaves and a few little fishes, is still a mystery, but nevertheless a fact. Whether the food enlarged in His hands as He blessed it, whether it increased as the disciples distributed it, or whether it swelled in the mouths of those who ate, we cannot say; but the miracle was accomplished, and after the multitude of people was filled, there were taken up twelve baskets full of the fragments. God can bless in a thousand ways which we know not.

A christian gentleman in an Eastern city entered into business, incorporating into his business policy the tithing system. He was greatly prospered, and later decided to double his tithe. This he has done for some years, and, today, is one of the largest and most successful merchants in his line.

No one should decide to practice tithing with a motive of financial gain. To do so will result in disappointment,

as that would be selfish, indeed. God, however, is a covenant keeping God, and will faithfully perform His promises in behalf of those who honor Him and recognize His claims upon them.

An Accurate Stewardship.

Too many forget that they are accountable to God for their stewardship, and are very indifferent and inaccurate in regard to it. Some give haphazardly or just as they feel. Such a stewardship is not scriptural in any sense, and cannot be expected to bring the favor and blessing of God. Where have we license to deal more carelessly with God than with our fellowmen? Has God not a right to, and does he not expect treatment and stewardship of the standard of accuracy as is demanded by our fellowmen?

Let us suppose an illustration. A man of large wealth proposes to start you in business, furnishing all capital required. He places you in entire charge of this business, but makes, as a condition of so doing, that you pay to him a tenth of the increase, the amount to be paid annually. During the year, as he came around, you gave him small amounts at various times, but at the end of the year made no effort to settle with him, accurately, for the year's business. After a time he comes around and demands settlement. To this demand you reply: "Did I not give you five dollars at one time, twenty-five at another, and fifteen at another?" "Very true," he replies, "but what I want is the amount of one tenth of the increase of the business, and that accurately." You do not blame him for demanding figures as to the increase of the business, and expecting an accurate payment of his share. With how much less courtesy and fairness should we treat Him who has furnished us all our capital, and who asks of us a tenth of the increase?

A Tested Stewardship.

The ministry of stewardship is a probationary one like all other things connected with our stay here. Consequently a tried ministry. There will be testings to face and difficulties to overcome. The same spirit which prompts to a robbing of God of reverence, worship, and service also prompts to a robbing of God of the tithe which is due him. Faithfulness in stewardship will be honored by God.

A well known Evangelist is responsible for the following incident, the truthfulness for which he vouches. A christian man and his good wife were led to tithe their income. Although they were poor, and the income barely sufficient to meet the family requirements, the tithe was faithfully laid aside for the Lord's treasury. Before long the only cow, upon which the family supply of milk and butter depended, died. The father and husband scarcely knowing what to do, under the circumstances, discussed, with his good wife, the advisability of using the tithe money for the purchasing of another cow. This, they correctly decided would not be right. Having obtained victory over the trial, the husband went and skinned the cow; sold the hide and tithed the money he received from the hide. Such faithfulness is certainly to be praised, and cannot go unrewarded.

There are many illustrations of faithful stewardship, but there should be many more. Those who practice definite, systematic giving, for a time, by tithing, would not want to return to a haphazard way of giving. It is too uncertain, too unsystematic and too unscriptural. Personally, I have practiced the tithing system ever since fifteen years of age, and would not think of turning away from it now.

A minister, speaking upon tithing, who was not a very good mathematician, said, that he had enjoyed tithing so much that he had made up his mind that he would double up, and instead of giving a tenth, he would give a twentieth. He means to say that he intended to give two tenths.

What to Tithe.

A legitimate question and one which is frequently asked is: "What are we to tithe?" The question seems to be whether the net proceeds should be tithed, or the income.

In olden times the tithe was taken of all that remained after the first-fruits had been set apart, and not that which remained after all expenses had been paid. There are some who argue that all that the law of the tithe requires is, that a tenth of the net proceeds be paid to the Lord, after all the expenses of the year, living expenses and all, have been met, and the net proceeds are ready to be placed in the bank or invested. If this were true many good people would be exempted from recognizing God's claims upon them, and thus miss the blessings which accrue from faithful stewardship, because many good people have nothing left at the end of the year, to put into the bank or to invest. The church, too would seriously miss the help and support of these people. It is not the surplus which is to be tithed, but the income or increase.

In Old Testament times men brought the tenth of the grain, or of the fruit, or of the cattle, etc. If they chose to pay the tithe in money, and retain the produce or cattle, they were obliged to add one fifth to the value. Lev. 27:31. Even the Levites were commanded to tithe the tithe which was paid to them, and this tithe of tithes was paid to Aaron the priest. Num. 18:26-28.

To be more explicit, if a man earns ten dollars per week,

it is the ten dollars which is to be tithed, not that which remains after the expenses of living are deducted. A farmer who hauls his grain to market should tithe the money obtained for same. The farmer who hauls no grain to market, but who feeds the same to his stock, should tithe the selling price of the stock, to which untithed grain was fed.

The law of the tithe provided no officers to compel the bringing in of the tithe, or to judge whether or not the tithe was justly paid. This was left to the individual consciences, they being required to solemnly declare in the presence of God, whether or not they had faithfully paid the tithe, at the end of every third year. Deut. 26: 12-16. The practice of the tithe is not difficult to such as desire to honor the Lord by faithfully bringing the same to Him. We would always keep in mind that it is the Lord with whom we are dealing not man.

To Whom Paid.

As previously noted, the tithe was originally paid to the Levites, for their support. They had received no land inheritance in Canaan; but the remaining tribes were to till the extra amount of ground and support them with the tenth part of the income from the ground, in order that they might devote themselves entirely to the service of the sanctuary, and be relieved from every anxiety concerning their temporal needs. If anything was paid out for any other cause, or for the support of any other persons, it was an extra offering and not deducted from this tenth which was to be paid into the treasury for the support of the Levites.

Many good men believe that the individual has no right to pay his tithe, or even a part of it, to individuals or causes outside of his church treasury. It is true that the cause of Christ is greatly hindered by men, who are good

meaning and whose intentions are good, paying out the Lord's money haphazardly or to individuals, or causes independent of the church treasury. This is sometimes done upon the pretext of the "Lord's leadings," etc.; but the cases are exceptional when God ignores his regularly ordained channels of blessing, and consents to or prompts to spasmodic, haphazard or even independent giving. There are church treasuries into—which prayerful, conscientious men cannot pay their tithes, because of a hireling, worldly ministry, high salaried secretaryships, or a backslidden condition in general. We would advise no one to pay a single penny into such a treasury. This, however, is not advising action independent of the church. The thing to do, in such cases, is to sever connections from such a church, and to become identified with a church where such conditions do not prevail. No man has any right to be identified with a church, into whose treasury he cannot conscientiously and joyously pay his tithe. God has a worthy people and a safe treasury in the world, despite much apostasy in these evil days. Money paid out for special causes, and independently of the Lord's recognized treasury, should evidently not effect the tithe.

Corrupt Financial Systems.

If the Holy Spirit and the Bible had anything to do with the finacial systems of some churches many falsely and corrupt practices would be abandoned. Giving, as an act of worship, is practically unknown. The church is educating people to a sort of a commercial trafficing of the cheapest and most beggarly kind. Supporting the Lord's cause by buying an oyster, a dish of ice cream, a piece of cake or a parcel of rummage is certainly a false and an undignifying practice, yet this is that to which the church is educating her devotees. Instead of educating her people to

give systematically, scripturally and as an act of worship, this false standard is endorsed by its prevailing practice. What a serious mistake! As a result of this system people give to God only by a cheap commercialism, and never experience the joy of giving as an act of worship.

The Prophetic Challenge

Who can tell what would be the result if the professed people of God would accept the challenge of Malachi? "Bring ye all the tithes into the store house, that there may be meat in my house, and prove me now herewith, saith the Lord of Hosts, if I will open you the windows of heaven, and pour you out of blessing, that there shall not be room enough to receive it." Mal. 3:10. Associated with this challenge is not only spiritual blessings—the opening of "the windows of heaven"—but also financial prosperity. The very next verse says. "And I will rebuke the devourer for your sakes, and shall not destroy the fruits of your ground; neither shall your vine cast her fruit before the time in the field, saith the Lord of Hosts."

Can God do this? Here is His challenge; try Him. Taking this challenge into account, and the indifference with which some men treat God's claims, it is not surprising that some do not prosper better spiritually: the surprise is that they can prosper at all. Some of the cause of spiritual decline and even financial failure is, withholding from God the tithe—that share of our increase which He claims.

As in olden times when people faithfully brought in the tithe, additional treasure rooms had to be built to accommodate the supply, so a faithful practice of the tithing system, on the part of the church of today, would necessitate the enlarging of the Lord's treasury to accommodate the ingathering. There would be plenty for home and for-

eign missions, plenty to support the ministry, to build churches and to carry on every legitimate department of the Lord's work. Instead of begging for funds to meet emergencies, departmental treasurers would have to be appointed to have charge of the various funds, and to make investigations as to needy fields and worthy causes for the most profitable investment of the Lord's money. The practice of the tithing system would revolutionize the affairs of the church, and would make financially possible the evangelization of the world in a single generation. It would give those in the church, employed in cheap commercial trafficing, time to go to prayer meeting, visit the sick, take proper care of their families, and do many other pious things which seem necessarily neglected under the practice of the false financial systems prevalent.

The church has nothing to fear, by the way of loss, in the practice of the tithe. A man once expressed fear that should he keep accurate account and tithe his income, he would give less, thinking that possibly he was now giving more than the tithe. There was no occasion for entertaining such fear in this man's case, and not in many other cases. Usually people are surprised at the amount they have to give, when they tithe. Further, it is a joy to give, when giving becomes a real and vital part of our religious worship.

Let us, as christians, adopt the scriptural method of definite, systematic giving. Having been faithful in our stewardship, having honestly and continuously recognized God's claims upon us, some day we shall receive the Master's applaudit: "Well done, thou good and faithful servant: thou hast been faithful over a few things, I will make thee ruler over many things: enter thou into the joys of thy Lord." Matt. 25:21.

CHAPTER XIII

THE FUTURE OF THE WICKED

"These shall go away into eternal punishment: but the righteous into eternal life," Matt. 25:46.

The subject around which we will gather our meditations is a much abused one, consequently a much neglected theme. Men have suggested almost every possible theory concerning the subject, accommodating such theories to their own fancies, their false conceptions of God, as well as to their estranged relations to Him. Let us seek to confine our statements and conclusions to God's Word.

If there is one theme, the treatment of which requires unprejudiced minds and hearts filled with a divine love, it is this one. The Christ compassion should be seen in the countenance, be heard in voice and felt in every move of him who speaks upon this solemn theme. As he who removes his head covering, steps softly and sadly as he passes down "death row" in the prison house, so we should treat solemnly this awful subject. The treatment of it demands tenderness, mingled with a firm loyalty to the sovereignty, love and justice to God, also an uncompromising faithfulness to His Word.

The Wicked Have a Future

Contrary to the teaching of annihilationists, who believe that the soul of man will, at some future time, cease to exist, and of the infidel who does not believe that man has a soul, but that he dies like the brute and that is the last of him; also contrary to others who are generally called "no-hellites," the Bible teaches that the wicked will have

a future. That future state of existence is not only assumed by Christ, but is specifically taught in the text. This will be considered more fully later on.

The Scripturalness of the Subject

There are three particular words in the original languages of the Bible which are translated "hell." One of them is the Old Testament Hebrew word, *Sheole,* which is translated both "hell," and "the grave." Another is the New Testament Greek word, *Hades,* which is also translated both "hell," and "the grave." There is, however, another word employed in the New Testament, which cannot be properly translated anyway than by a word which means the abode of the wicked dead. This word is *Gehenna,* and is usually translated "hell." It is the eternal abode of the damned.

It is the strong word employed by Jesus in the following texts: Matt. 5:22, 29, 30; Matt. 10:28; Mark 9:43, 45, 47; Luke 12:5; Matt. 23:33; James 3:6. A careful reading of these scriptures will help to clear up our idea concerning the solemnity of the subject and the emphasis Jesus placed upon it.

The doctrine of the retribution of the wicked has a larger prominence in the Bible than is sometimes thought. The term "hell" is used twenty-three times in the New Testament, and in nineteen of these instances it is employed by Christ. Whatever may be meant by the teaching, it is evident that it is of no small importance.

The name for the future abode of the wicked, *Gehenna,* came to be employed in this way: Hinnom was a valley lying south of Jerusalem. It was the place where the idol Moloch had been worshipped by the sacrificing of infants to it. When Josiah overthrew this idolatry he defiled the

place by casting into it the bones of dead persons, which was, for the Jews, the greatest of all pollutions. From that time this valley became the dumping ground for the city of Jerusalem. The refuse of the city was cast into it, and a fire having been kindled, all that was combustible was consumed. Here a continual smoke from burning refuse ascended. *Gehenna* is the Greek name for the valley of *Hinnom.*

It is evident that Jesus meant to teach that there is a place which bears a relation to earth similar to the relation which Hinnom sustained to Jerusalem. Gehenna or hell is then earth's dumping ground. A place likened unto a burning, smoking pit, as a punishment of the wicked or earth's refuse, is taught by Jesus.

Hell a Logical Necessity.

Waiving, for the moment, the scripturalness of the theory of a place generally called "hell," it will be no difficult matter to prove to any reasonable mind that such a place is a logical necessity.

Why do we have insane asylums? Because there are those who are unfitted to mingle with the populace, at will. The asylum is the best solution of the problem which the state has been able to make. It is an expression of the good will of the state for the protection of its normal citizens.

Why are penitentiaries and other penal institutions necessary? Simply because a certain part of our citizenship has become criminal, and to allow these people liberty would be to endanger seriously the lives and property of others. It is the wisest attitude the state has been able to take in relation to the subject of criminality. It is not only an expression of justice to the criminal, but also an expression of good will to those who are protected from such.

Why is a graveyard a necessity? Because when persons die, no matter how dear they have been to us, their physical bodies must be put aside, because their condition demands it. Why is a garbage barrel a necessity? Because of refuse which must be collected and disposed of. Unsightly as a garbage barrel, solemn and lonely as is a graveyard, pitiful and shunned as is an insane asylum and awful and dreaded as in a penitentiary, they are all logically necessary.

Immortal man is destined to live forever; and as it is evident that many are determined to live wickedly here, and thus die in their rebellious and sinful state, a place for such, into which they can be banished is a logical necessity. After placing salvation within the reach of every man, at the cost of the life of His own Son, Jesus Christ, hell is the best that a loving God can do, for such who trample His love and mercy beneath their feet. It is an indispensable provision, a logical necessity, an expression of God's justice to offenders, and of His love to the obedient. Every garbage barrel for the collecting of refuse, every cemetery for the depositing of our dead, every asylum for the safe keeping of the insane, every penitentiary for the incarceration of our criminals is an argument for the logical necessity of a hell. It may be reckoned as the garbage barrel, the cemetery, the insane asylum or the penitentiary of the universe.

Its Purpose

The original purpose of this place which we speak of as hell is specifically stated by Jesus. One statement from Him, whose knowledge of these things is perfect, should silence every speculation. "Then shall He say unto them on the left hand, Depart from me, ye cursed, into the eternal fire which is prepared for the devil and his angels,"

Matt. 25:41. From this text we understand that the eternal fire was not originally prepared for men, but for "the devil and his angels."

There are a few scriptures which throw some further light upon the original purpose of hell. Peter says: "For if God spared not angels when they sinned, but cast them down to hell, and committed them to pits of darkness, to be reserved unto judgment; * * * the Lord knoweth how to deliver the godly out of temptation, and to keep the unrighteous under punishment unto the day of judgment," II Peter 2:4-9. Jude also says: "And angels that kept not their own principality, but left their proper habitation, He hath kept in everlasting bonds under darkness unto the judgment of the great day," Jude 6.

Briefly told, the facts which are revealed are as follows: There was once a rebellion in heaven, when a part of the angels were cast out. The rebellion was headed by one who probably belonged to the arch-angelic rank, and whose name appears to have been Lucifer. It was probably prompted by an ambition on the part of its leader to be equal with God. This rebellion must have occurred during a period of angelic probation, which no doubt has long ago ceased. It may have been a long time before the creation of the world. These angels became bad or fallen angels, whose leader also was transformed from a brilliant arch-angel to the devil or Satan, by which names he is commonly spoken of. Hell was then originally prepared for the devil and his angels. It became the dumping ground into which the refuse of heaven was cast, in which the criminals of the heavenly world were incarcerated.

A Change in Purpose.

Regardless of what has been said concerning the orig-

inal purpose for which hell was prepared, it is to be noted that in our text we see men going away into it. Who are they who are sent away into eternal punishment? A reading of the context discloses who they are, the wicked, the Christ rejecters. They have lived a Christ-rejecting life, and stand before the judgment seat as such. They are rebels against God; criminals in relation to the laws of heaven. In the day of reckoning, which is pictured here, the best that God can do with these Christ-rejecting, evil-working, rebellious ones is to banish them into the penitentiary of the universe.

From the text previously quoted (Matt. 25:41) which says: "Then shall He say also unto them on his left hand, Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire," etc., as well as the one just quoted, it is evident that the place which we speak of as hell has also become a dumping ground for the earth. Having previously noted that hell originally was prepared as a dumping ground or penitentiary for heaven, but that men are now being sent into it, shall we conclude that it has lost its original purpose? Not so. Instead of losing its original purpose, it has an added one. It has become the dumping ground for both heaven and earth. But why must men be banished into that place prepared for the devil and his angels? There is just one, but a very plausible reason: Wicked, Christ-rejecting men have allied themselves with Satan; have followed him in his rebellion and apostasy against God, and it is certainly just and right that they should share with Satan and his fallen angels, their fate. Speaking upon this subject, Dr. Dixon declares that hell was not made for men, and that they will be "intruders" there. This is probably putting it too strongly, but was said for the purpose of properly interpreting the original purpose of hell.

Let him who takes exceptions to the teaching concerning a place into which the wicked are to be banished, answer this question: If it became necessary to provide a place for the banishment of the rebellious from such an exalted place of heaven, is it unreasonable to conclude that earth, whose inhabitants are of a lower order, should, in all probability, need one? Hell is then seen to be a place into which the criminals of both heaven and earth are to be banished.

A Necessary Alteration.

As a result of a change of purpose concerning this place of banishment, adding to its original intention that of a place to banish fallen angels, the purpose of banishing wicked men, an alteration may have been necessary at some time. To expect an alteration of a place designed for a certain purpose, when required to serve another purpose also, is natural. If hell was prepared originally to accommodate fallen angels, as Jesus says, and later was found necessary for the accommodation of wicked men, we should not be surprised to find some mention or at least some hint concerning such an alteration or enlargement.

There is a verse of scripture in Isaiah, the interpretation of which may not be agreed upon by all, but which expresses an idea similar to the one suggested here. It reads as follows: "Therefore hell hath enlarged herself, and opened her mouth without measure: and their glory, and their multitude, and their pomp, and he that rejoiceth, shall descend into it," Isa. 5:14. The word, "therefore," which introduces this verse, is a philosophical word and immediately connects the thought expressed to something previously stated which is the cause. A reading of the previous verses discloses the fact that it was because of the great

and increasing wickedness of Israel in the forms of covetousness and intemperance which caused hell to "enlarge herself." The prophet, Habakkuk, in chapter two and verse five, also expresses himself in similar language. Should any one insist that these texts refer to the grave and not to the eternal abode of the wicked, there need to be no controversy, as there is a vital and close relation between the grave and hell, to those who persist in their sins.

Its Reception to the Wicked.

In connection with the above consideration, a word concerning the reception which hell gives to wicked men might be said. The same prophet writes: "Hell from beneath is moved for thee to meet thee at thy coming," Isa. 14:9. The words were spoken in relation to the wicked king of Babylon, but no doubt expresses, at least in figure, the reception accorded by hell to those who live wickedly upon the earth.

Its Duration.

One of the questions most frequently asked in connection with this subject is in relation to its duration. Passing by every theory offered, the word of Jesus shall be our final answer to the question.

In expressing the duration of the period into which the wicked are sent, Jesus, in our text, employed the same word as He used to express the duration of the period into which the righteous are welcomed. This word is *aionos,* which means, *without end, never ceasing, everlasting.* The King James translation uses the word "everlasting" in relation to the wicked, and "eternal" in relation to the righteous. From this it might be erroneously inferred that different words are used in the Greek text, from which the

translation was made. This is a mistake, and is corrected in the American Standard version, by the use of the word "eternal" in relation to both.

Some one may argue that the wages of sin are death, and that this means spiritual death, which involves extinction of being, and from this deduce a theory of annihilation. This theory is the result of an erroneous idea concerning the death which is the penalty of sin. Let us go to the Word for a proper understanding of this term, *death.* Here we have a picture of the final judgment, which deals with the destinies of men: "And I saw the dead, the great and the small, standing before the throne; and books were opened: and another book was opened, which is the book of life: and the dead were judged out of the things which were written in the books, according to their works. And the sea gave up the dead that were in it; and death and Hades gave up the dead that were in them: and they were judged every man according to their works, and death and Hades were cast into the lake of fire. *This is the second death, even the lake of fire.* And if any was not found written in the book of life, he was cast into the lake of fire," Rev. 20:12-15.

The picture given here is no doubt the same as is given by Jesus in Matthew the twenty-fifth chapter, in which our text is found, except in more minute detail. Jesus spoke it prophetically, while the writer of the Revelation saw it coming to pass, in detail. Both represent an assembled universe standing before the judgment throne. Jesus said that the wicked shall go away into eternal punishment; here they are seen to be cast into the lake of fire. Then, as though some one might not be able to reconcile this treatment of sinful man with the curse of death which was

pronounced upon the sinner, the inspired record adds by way of explanation: *This is the second death, even the lake of fire.*

This fact will also clear up a wrong conception of the subject of immortality. There are those who have mistakenly supposed that eternal life and the immortality of the soul are the same thing, and as only the saved have eternal life, the wicked do not have an immortality of existence. Upon this false conclusion is based much of the theory of the annihilation of the wicked, no-hellism, etc. As has been seen, banishment from God is "death," and as it is declared by Jesus to be "eternal," the subject of eternal death is made clear. Jesus also indicates that this place is one of weeping, wailing and torment, hence a place of existence, not extinction. This then is "eternal death" contrasted with "eternal life," into which the righteous will be welcomed. "Eternal life" is the soul in contact wih God; "eternal death" is the soul apart from God. Both are determined by men's attitude and begin already in this life. "He that believeth *hath eternal life*" "He that loveth not *abideth in death,*" St. John 6:47, I John 3:14.

The only reasonable and logical conclusion which can be arrived at is, that the retribution of the wicked will continue as long as the joys of the righteous last. Jesus is the authority for this conclusion, and no other word is necessary. If the joys of heaven will some time cease, we may expect also that the sorrows of the wicked will do so. If the bliss of the redeemed will continue without end, there is no reason to doubt but that the woes of the wicked will continue likewise. No man can measure the limits of damnation without, at the same time, measuring the limits of salvation. If it is true of the righteous that:

"After they've been there ten thousand years,
Bright shining as the sun;
They've no less days to sing God's praise
Than when we first begun;"

It is also true of the wicked that: After they've been there ten thousand years, suffering the society of demons, fiends, murderers, liars, hypocrites, drunkards and the refuse of the world, they will have no less days to spend in that awful place than when they first begun. This is an awful, awful fact, but certainly true.

Men may deny the fact of hell, but that does not change the reality of hell any more than a denial of the fact of God or of heaven changes the realities of them. He who spends time and energy in attempting to argue away the facts of the retribution of the wicked is foolishly and uselessly beating his own head against realities as firm as the foundation of the earth.

Its Location.

The question which usually follows that of the *duration* of the place called hell is concerning its *location.* There are some things which Jesus specifically taught upon the subject of the future of the wicked, and upon these there need be no speculation. There are some other things which we would like to know, concerning which He said nothing. He, no doubt, discarded to us all that it is necessary for us to know upon the subject.

Geographically, it would be a difficult matter to locate this place of banishment. Jesus speaks of it as being a place of "outer darkness," Matt. 8:12, 22:13, 25:30. Taken literally, this would mean that the place into which the wicked will be banished is one where not a single ray of the missions of glowing suns can ever come. Darkness, awful

darkness, continuous darkness, midnight darkness, eternal darkness, how dreadful the thought! But this does not answer the question as to hell's location. It might be in a place so remote in the universe that light would never come, or it might be in the heart of the earth, a place also to which no light could ever penetrate. The prophet Isaiah, in a text previously quoted, speaks of "hell from beneath." Usually we think of hell as being downward. There are those who believe hell to be somewhere in the subterranean regions of the earth, and attempt to calculate how far beneath us it might be. While their calculating may have some merit, we will not detain with it.

Speculative as it may appear when we attempt to locate this place even in thought, the awful facts remain unchanged. For some, hell seems to have already begun. They have hell on earth—hell in their hearts, hell in their homes and hell hereafter. It is not only a place, but a state as well. This state begins in this life, in this world, and projects into the next. Should you then insist upon knowing the geographical location of hell I should answer: I do not know where the other end of hell is, but one thing I know, that one end of hell is here, in the hearts of wicked men. The same is also true concerning heaven. While there is somewhere a place, a celestial capital where God dwells and which we usually speak of as heaven, to locate it geographically is impossible. Heaven, however, is not only a place, but a state as well. This state begins in this life and continues in the other. Some people have one end of heaven here—heaven in their hearts, heaven in their homes and heaven hereafter.

Choosing Hell

To what extent men deliberately choose hell is a large question. Sometimes we speak of men being lost because

they commit certain sins. The sin of sins, because of which men are lost, is the sin of rejecting Christ. To reject Christ, who is the Savior of men, is choosing eternal destruction.

Judging from the attitude of some men, who absolutely reject all that is pure, good, noble and right, and deliberately choose that which is vile, low and debased, some men make hell their choice. The man who chooses the filthy saloon, with its low, vile companionships in preference to a well-kept, tidy home, who chooses the arms of the harlot in preference to those of a pure wife, is certainly choosing hell.

The story is told of a man who was a member of the Klu Klux Klan, a secret, oath-bound society in the South, which was banded together to oppose certain Union measures. He was arrested, tried for treason and sentenced to the gallows. His father was a Presbyterian minister, widely known, and influential. The conduct of his son followed by his conviction brought great grief to the heart of the aged minister, who addressed himself to the task of securing, if possible, a pardon for his son. He travelled far and wide, securing the signatures of friends and sympathizers to his petition. After he had secured thousands of signatures to his petition he presented it in person to President Lincoln, who granted the pardon. The minister was permitted to carry this message of pardon to his son, accompanied by the proper government officer. With a heart running over with deepest gratitude, the aged minister, whose form had now become more stooped and his hairs more gray, entered the cell of his once-doomed but now-pardoned son, to announce to him the good news. Imagine the grief of the father and the surprise of the officer when this man, on whose neck the father had wept

tears of joy, declared coldly, brazenly and defiantly that he would accept no favors from the administration. This man deliberately chose not only sin, but the penalty attached to his sin, rather than to accept offered pardon. If men will do this, in relation to such things, the question which is asked, whether men *choose* hell, does not seem altogether inconsistent.

Again, if a wicked man could possibly get into heaven, what would heaven be to him? Would it be "heaven"—a place of bliss and joy—or would it be to him a place of punishment? Judging from the discomfort which wicked men manifest when in the company of Christians, and the manner in which they shun the society of such, one is almost forced to conclude that it is a punishment for wicked men to be in the presence of Christians.

Illustrating this point, the following incident might be related. A minister was preaching at a large camp-meeting, which was being conducted in a certain city. During this time he desired to visit a barber shop, and, being a stranger, stopped, for a single time, in a shop which was near the camp-ground. Scarcely had he sat down to await his turn (there being several men ahead of him) when he heard the click of gambling devices and the rough language of men who were in an adjoining room, the entrance to which was simply overhung by a curtain. From the moment he entered, the proprietor, who evidently recognized him as the minister who was preaching at the meeting near by, seemed nervous and showed signs of discomfort. Walking up to one of the men who was in line for the chair ahead of the minister, the proprietor whispered something into his ear. From the signs of uneasiness and discomfort caused by his presence, the minister concluded that perhaps he was asking the man ahead to give up his

place to him, so that his presence might be excused. Sure enough, when the turn came for the man ahead to get into the chair the barber invited the minister into the chair. He was soon shaved by a somewhat uneasy barber, and allowed to leave. This case is neither imaginary nor exaggerated. If men, who are persisting in sin here, are caused to become so uneasy and restless because of the presence of a Christian, what would be their condition if they should be surrounded by all the holy environments of heaven? Whether or not men deliberately choose "hell," by choosing sin they reject Christ, which is an equivalent choice. Men choose hell and burn it upon their lusts here, and hell is, in a very real sense, a projection of what men have here.

Some Questions Answered.

In the treatment of this subject there are always some objections which can often be answered by the asking and answering of questions. Let us ask and seek to answer a few questions relating to the subject.

1. *Is it right to punish sin?* To this question there is almost a universal answer: "Yes." We may not agree upon methods of punishing sin, but all agree that sin should be punished in some manner. Upon what logical ground can it be concluded that it is right that sin committed against fellowmen, society and the state should be punished, but that sin against God should go unpunished.

A mother's heart was broken by the conduct of her son, which brought upon him a penitentiary sentence. Realizing his guilt, despite a broken heart of love she said: "The only place for him is the penitentiary." A drunken father, whose name could be mentioned, came home one day and demanded of his daughter, who was yet in her

teens, the small sum of money which he knew was in her possession. Upon her refusal he went back to the saloon, borrowed the saloon-keeper's gun, and, returning home found his daughter busy at household duties. Pointing the gun at her, he pulled the trigger, and she fell upon the floor, dead. The father was tried and sentenced to electrocution. Before the hour of his execution he was visited by the chaplain, to whom he made the following statement. "They say that I shot my daughter. I have no knowledge of having committed the deed, but they say it is true and it must be true. I have nothing to offer as an excuse: I am to receive only what I deserve." When properly viewed, it is evident to all reasonable minds that it is right that sin be punished. Does some one concede that the punishment of sin is necessary and right, but that it should not be "eternal?" Let us not forget that "eternal" punishment in the next or spirit world is equivalent to a life sentence in this world. Waiving the question of the justice or injustice of our laws, men are not content to punish criminals for a life time only, but take their lives, thus hurrying them off into the next world. I presume the only reason courts do not inflict punishment beyond this life, is because their jurisdiction stops with the close of life. If it is right the good be rewarded, and God has prepared an "eternal" bliss for those who love and obey him, it would be only a logical conclusion that "eternal" punishment be meted out to those who rebel against God and reject Jesus Christ.

2. *Could God be a loving God and punish sinners?* We must not forget that although God is *loving*, and has permitted love to predominate in his dealings with the human race, He has also the attribute of *justice*. He is both *just* and *loving*. His attribute of *love* was manifested to overflowing when He sent Jesus down from heaven to live

and die to save a lost, ruined race. It is one continuous story of love, from the manger cradle to the grave and back to the throne. Justice demands the punishment of Christ rejectors, for whom Jesus died to save, but who refuse Him. Men will close their eyes to the fact of God's love manifested in Christ, and will argue for a revelation of love, when justice is operating. It is, instead of being a question whether God can be loving and punish sinners, rather a question whether God can be just and not do so.

Said a lad, yet in his teens, to a minister who had preached a sermon on retribution: "Do you think my mother would put my hand upon the stove and burn it, causing me pain? If God is loving would he not be as kind as my mother? Would he send me to hell?" This lad had no doubt caught up this reasoning from the lips of some other and older persons.

Now, in reality, God sends no one to hell. Men elect it for themselves. The best that a loving God can do is to second man's choice, and appoint him his portion, after he has persisted in that choice. God has made salvation possible to every rebel sinner. He has warned men against the awful consequences of sin. He has established the church as a lighthouse, a life-saving station. He has sent the Holy Spirit into the world to draw men unto Christ, who is the Savior; and the church and the Spirit invite men to "come" and be saved. He is not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance, II Peter 3:9. He who is lost against God's will, and despite God's offer of salvation. He must persist in going down, headlong over God's offers of mercy, over every prayer which has been offered for him, over every sermon he has ever heard preached and Christian hymn he has ever heard sung. After such an offer, such warning and

such entreaty is God to blame, when men are lost? There is only one answer, which comes in unison, as thousands of voices: "No."

3. *Is hell a place of literal fire?* Jesus taught that the punishment of the wicked is both negative and positive. It is not only banishment from the presence of God, but is a place of torment, where there is weeping and wailing. He speaks of unquenchable fire, and smoke. In the case of the rich man and Lazarus, the rich man said: "I am tormented in this flame," and begged for water to cool his tongue. This sounds very real at least. We also read of a lake of fire and brimstone.

No doubt one of the things which will augment the sufferings of the wicked will be the memory of lost opportunity and slighted mercy. The immortal memory, which man will take with him to the future world, will no doubt accuse forever. Awful as this will be, it will constitute only a part of the negative side of the sinners punishment, while, beyond this, it will be fearfully positive, intensely real.

CHAPTER XIV

THE GREATNESS OF GOD'S BOOK

"The study of the Bible is woefully neglected," said an eminent lawyer recently. How true this is, few seem to realize. Though the increasingly large number of copies annually sold and the number of languages into which it has been translated testify to the popularity of the Bible, it yet remains true, that comparatively few people have a proper appreciation of it as God's own message to man. Christian workers should do everything in their power to stimulate reverent, intelligent and prayerful Bible study.

The Book of Books

The Bible is the Book of Books, because it is God's book. In it will be found the keys of all the treasures of knowledge man will ever need in this life, or in the one to come.

A Scientific Book. Whoever denies that the Bible is a scientific book is mistaken. Of course, the Bible does not deal with the comparatively small and petty matters of science; these God has left for man to work out. But upon the all-occupying, scientific subjects of creation and life the Bible speaks the last and final word. These subjects have engaged the brightest minds for centuries: many theories, which have left God out, have been proposed, only to be exploded, and man comes back to the word of God for the only authoritative information upon the subject. There is much that is called "science" which is falsely so called; but the Christian may feel assured that no science which

is truly scientific will ever contradict the Bible, for true science is simply classified knowledge about God's universe, and the facts about God's own universe will be found to harmonize with God's own book.

A Historical Book. The Bible has been proven to contain the only reliable information relating to man's early history. Blatant critics have not hesitated to make light of some of its references to the ancient world; declaring that certain cities, such as Nineveh, Babylon, Lachish, etc., never were, and that certain tribes of which it speaks, such as the Hittites, never existed. These critics have classed the biblical records of these cities and people as "tales of oriental fiction." Imagine the chagrin of such over-wise ones, when the spades of the archaeological explorers dug out these cities from their ruins into which they had fallen, also the hidden records of the Hittites, and caused them to stand out as a silent, powerful, indisputable testimony to the historical correctness of God's book. Not many years ago critics argued that Moses could not possibly have written the Pentateuch, the first five books of the Bible, because, they said, the art of writing was not known in the days of Moses. Recent explorations have disclosed the fact that Egyptian civilization was in a high state, and the art of writing was well known to them more than a thousand years before Moses. It is evident that some of the arts of this early civilization have been lost, and that we are only gradually recovering them. It is believed by some that the Egyptian Pyramids, which have puzzled succeeding generations for centuries, were built when the Egyptians knew cement-making, which later became a lost art, and which we have lately begun to discover and to appropriate to our uses. If so, the query, how the builders of the Pyramids succeeded in placing such huge stones in the positions they

occupy, is easily answered. If they were not constructed in this way, as likely they were not, the mystery still remains unsolved, but argues a high state of civilization. The art of embalming, which the Egyptians knew, by which they were able to preserve their dead until this day, is still a lost art. In the light of these and innumerable other facts, criticisms, pressed against the historical accuracy of the Bible, appear insignificant and trifling.

A Book on Law. While men do not always acknowledge it, the Bible is the greatest law book in the world. This is not true simply because it gave law to the Jews, and because it is the Christian's guide in all matters, but because all civilization has, consciously or unconsciously, extracted its moral or ethical codes, written or unwritten, from the Bible. All laws are good in proportion to their harmony with the Bible, and all laws are bad in proportion to their lack of harmony with God's great law book. Note the long rows of volumes upon the shelves of the statesman; count them in the libraries of our capitols: all that these numerous volumes contain, upon the subject of law which is worth preserving, may be found within the lids of this one small volume, the Bible.

A Book on Philosophy. Apart from the Bible, most of the philosophy of the world is misleading and false. In fact the philosophy of the world was upside down, when Christ came and turned it right side up. An illustration of this is found in the fact, that the world knew no better, than that he who was served most, had the largest number of servants running his errands and obeying his commands, was the greatest. Christ completely upset this false philosophy, and declared that it was not he who was served most, but he who served most who was greatest—an entirely new philosophy. The Bible propounds and expounds the profound-

est and farthest-reaching philosophies the world ever heard; and while they are relatively simple to the child of faith, they have set the Websterian brains of the centuries to thinking.

A Book of Past, Present and Future. The Bible never becomes antiquated, or out of date. It is the work of the past, of the present, and of the future. It has solved man's, every past difficulty. It will solve man's every *present* problem. It will answer man's, every *future* question. No spiritual need of the human family has ever appeared, which was not found to have been anticipated, and provided for in this great book. No church or community problem has ever arisen, which was not solved, in advance, by the author of this book, and the results set forth here. No soul anxiety has ever been experienced, for which this book has failed to have a perfectly satisfactory prescription. More up-to-date than the latest magazine, or today's newspaper is God's great book, the Bible.

A Book on Salvation. Above all, the Bible is a book on salvation. All other themes or subjects are secondary, incidental and tributary to this one great theme. It is not merely a classic on religion, but the only, authentic source of information on the subject of salvation. It alone is the Christian mariner's chart, and the pilgrim's guide, which unmistakably points him to heaven. Many good books have been written and are still being written; but they are only good in the measure that they ring true to the Bible. Compare them all with the Bible, and reject or accept them upon this basis. Beware of all books which will not bear the most rigid scrutiny and comparison.

The Divinity of the Bible.

In this day when the Bible is being attacked from every

conceivable angle, it is well to note some indisputable facts concerning it, which should convince any intelligent man of its divine authorship, its sacredness, its divinity.

The Testimony of the Bible Itself. ' 'All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness; that the man of God may be perfect, throughly furnished unto all good works." II Tim. 3:16. Since the Scriptures themselves should be the last answer to every question and the final solution to every problem, this, in itself, should be sufficient evidence of the divinity of the Bible.

But some logician may argue, that to prove a thing true by its own testimony, is merely reasoning in a circle, but getting nowhere. Logically, this is true; but if this verse, just quoted, would declare that all scripture is *not* inspired, there is not an infidel in the country who would not be quoting this text against the inspiration of the scriptures. The testimony of the Scriptures to themselves is, that they are inspired, literally, *God-breathed.* There are, however, many other, indisputable evidences, as we shall see.

Its Marvelous Unity. The Bible contains sixty-six sacred books in one volume. It was penned by thirty-eight or forty writers, covering a period of nearly or altogether fifteen hundred years. The men chosen as the penman of God came from all walks of life, from the humble shepherds and common fishermen, to the most highly educated and the royal. Subjects, from the commonest things of daily life to the most exalted and profound, are treated. Some parts are poetry, others prose. Despite all this, there is not a discord from the first word of Genesis to the last of Revelation. Every apparent contradiction of itself, even in

smallest matters, will readily disappear as a result of an intelligent understanding of the Book and its content.

Its Complete Triumph over All Its Enemies. Bold and daring enemies of the Bible have assaulted it in every possible manner. One by one they have been silenced and put to shame, as the Old Book has stood, while their arrows of criticism have fallen spent and futile to the ground. Voltaire, while residing at Geneva, sneeringly said. "Before the beginning of the nineteenth century Christianity will have disappeared from the earth." The very room in which these blasphemous words were spoken was later used as a Bible depository, with Bibles stacked from floor to ceiling. The very press which Voltaire used to print his infidel literature was later used for printing the Bible.

The Divine Protection Afforded it During the Dark Ages. More than once, decrees and threats went forth for the annihilation of every copy of the scriptures extant. Despite this, God took care of His book, and during the dark ages hid a number of copies away where neither the devil nor his agents, wicked men, could find them. Since those days, God has permitted them to be discovered, and many manuscripts have been found, and some are still being found. The latest and most important discovery made during the last century was in 1859, when Tischendorf found, in a convent on Mt. Sinai, the Greek manuscript of the New Testament, which is known as the Sinaitic Manuscript, and now lies in the Imperial Library in St. Petersburg.

The Sacrifices Men Have Made to Translate It. Perhaps we, who are in possession of nicely printed and well-bound English copies of the Holy Bible, never stopped to consider what it cost to give us the Bible in our own tongue. Many a man spent his life, translating by the dim light of a smoking torch, the Old Testament scriptures from the orig-

inal Hebrew, or the New Testament from the original Greek.

The work was rendered all the more difficult because of the fact, that it had to be done secretly, because of the opposition of the authorities. Not a few lost their heads, or were banished into exile for engaging in the translation of the Scriptures. Early in the sixteenth century a Catholic priest said to Tyndale: We had better be without God's law, than the law of the pope." To this Tyndal replied. "If God spare my life, ere many years I will cause a plough-boy to know more of the scriptures than thou doest." Tyndale succeeded in giving the New Testament to the world in such simple language that a "plough-boy could read it, although he had to complete his work in exile, and died as a martyr in 1536.

If there is any one of us who has not thanked God for the noble, self-sacrificing lives which have given us our splendid translations of the Bible, we should do it now. We should also accept their sacrificing devotion, to their difficult but necessary tasks, as a testimony to the divinity of the Bible.

Its Effect upon Civilization. The Bible is absolutely the fore-runner of all civilization. No civilization has ever been found where the Bible has not gone. Before the Bible was taken to the South Sea Islands, heathenism reigned to the extent of cannibalism. Men would eat each others flesh, and have a jubilee while so doing. When John G. Paton, that apostle to the South Sea Islands, took the Bible to them, cannibalism was obliged to go.

Although there is much in civilization which is not Christian, there is nothing which is good, even from the viewpoint of the humanitarian, but which must be accredited to the Bible, for it is the fore-runner of all civilization. Compare our own great America with its Gospel light, its

government, its appreciation of womankind, its educational institutions, its hospitals, its cleanly, sanitary homes, with the Soudan of Africa, with its religious darkness and superstition, its absence of government, its slavery of womankind, its ignorance, its unsanitary homes, and you have a picture of the effect of the Bible upon men. Of course there is much in our so-called Christian America which is not ideal, but wholly and awfully wrong; but this is not to be charged against the Bible, but against the setting aside of the teachings of God's book. It is only in the measure that the teaching of the Bible is respected and practiced, that these marvelous transformations among men are realized.

Its Circulation. The majority of books never exceed, in circulation, their first edition of a thousand copies, and but few are translated into any language besides the one in which they were written. The Bible has exceeded the combined circulation of over two hundred of the best selling books the world has ever had, and continues to outsell a dozen of the most popular, current books. To date, the Bible has been translated in whole, or in part, into nine hundred fifty-three languages and dialects, and is being translated into new languages every year, by courageous, self-sacrificing missionaries.

The cost of a Bible in the thirteenth century was a hundred and fifty dollars. During the same century two whole arches of the London bridge were built at a cost of one hundred and twenty-five dollars. Wages at that time being about four cents per day, it would have required a labouring man's wages for a period of fifteen years to purchase a single copy of the Bible. It has triumphed in its circulation until, at the present, a half day's wages will purchase a fairly good copy, and the significant sum of five cents will purchase a cheaply bound New Testament.

It's influence Upon the Lives of Men. The last testimony to the divinity of the scriptures, here named, but by no means the least, is the influence it has upon the lives of men. Its messages does not merely *reform* men, but *transforms* them. It not only kindles, in the hearts of men, a new aspiration, but puts into them something which enables them to live according to that new aspiration. Its effect upon the lives of men is nothing less than miraculous. It lifts the fallen out of the gutter, and regenerates and sanctifies him. It disrobes the self-righteous of his filthy rags, and clothes him with the garments of righteousness. The transformation of a sinful wretch, a veritable human devil, into a living, shining saint is nothing less than a miracle. Nothing else but the power of the gospel can accomplish it. This, then, is one of the strongest testimonies to the divinity of the Bible.

Tributes to the Bible.

Many and glowing are the tributes paid to the Bible by various writers. From the many, only one or two will be quoted:

"Viewed merely as a literary production, the Bible is a marvelous book, and without a rival. All the libraries of the world could not furnish material enough for so rich a treasure of the choicest gems of genius, wisdom and experience. It embraces works of about forty authors, representing the extremes of society, from the throne of the king to the boat of the fisherman; it was written during a period of sixteen centuries, on the banks of the Nile, in the desert of Arabia, in the land of promise, in Asia Minor, in classical Greece, and in imperial Rome; it begins with the creation, it ends with the new heavens and the new earth, and describes all the intervening stages in the revelation of God,

and in the spiritual development of man. It uses all forms of literary composition; it rises to the highest heights and descends to the lowest depths of humanity; it is acquainted with every joy and every woe; it contains the spiritual biography of every human heart; it is suited to every class of society; it is as universal as the race, and as boundless as eternity. This matchless combination of human excellencies points to its divine character and origin, as the absolute perfection of Christ's humanity is an evidence of his divinity.

"But the Bible is first and last a book of religion. It is a book of life for all ages and nations. It presents the religion of God, both in its preparatory growth under the law and promise, and in its completion under the gospel. It speaks to us as immortal beings upon the highest themes, and with irresistible authority. It can instruct, edify, warn, terrify, appease, cheer and encourage, as no other book. It seizes man in the hidden depths of his intellectual and moral constitution, and goes to the quick of the soul, to that mysterious point where it is connected with the unseen world and the Father of spirits. It purifies, ennobles, sanctifies man, and brings him into living union with God. It has light for the blind, strength for the weak, food for the hungry, drink for the thirsty; it has, in precept for example, a counsel for every relation in life, a comfort for every sorrow, a balm for every wound. Like the diamond, it casts its luster in every direction; like a torch, the more it is shaken, the more it shines; like a healing herb, the harder it is pressed, the sweeter is its fragrance. Of all the books in the world, the Bible is the only one of which we never tire, but which we admire and love more and more in proportion as we use it.

"What an unspeakable blessing, that this inexhaustible

treasure of divine truth and comfort is now accessible, without material alteration, to almost every nation on earth in its own tongue, and in Protestant countries at least, even to the humblest man and woman that can read and write!"—Philip Schaff in Preface to Lange's Commentary on Matthew.

An unknown author has paid to the Bible the following tribute, which is probably the greatest eulogy ever written upon the Bible, in so few words.

"This book contains the mind of God, the state of man, the way of salvation, the reward of saints and the doom of sinners. Its histories are true, its doctrines holy, and its precepts binding. It contains light to direct you, food to support you and comfort to cheer you. It is the traveler's map, the pilgrim's staff, the pilot's compass, the soldier's sword and the Christian's charter. It is a river of pleasure, a mine of wealth and a paradise of glory. It is given you in life, will be open at the judgment and will be remembered forever. Read it to be wise; believe it to be safe, and practice it to be holy."

Facts About the Bible.

An unknown writer of the last century spent much time in examining the Bible, in a very careful and painstaking way, and has given to the world the following information about the King James Version of the Holy Scriptures.

	Old Testament.	*New Testament.*	*Total.*
Books	39	27	66
Chapters	929	260	1,189
Verses	23,214	7,959	31,713
Words	592,439	181,253	773,692
Letters	2,728,110	838,380	3,566,490

The shortest and middle chapter of the Bible is Ps. 117.

The middle verse of the Bible is Ps. 118:8.

The middle book of the Old Testament is Proverbs.

The middle chapter of the Old Testament is Job 29.

The shortest book of the New Testament is II Thess.

The middle chapter of the New Testament is between the 13th and 14th chapters of Romans.

The shortest verse in the New Testament and in the Bible is John 11:35.—*Taken from Our Sixty-Six Sacred Books.*

Name of the Bible.

The book which we now know as the Bible was not always so-called. This name is comparatively recent, and comes either from the Greek word *Biblion,* meaning a little book, or from the word *Biblia,* which is both Greek and Latin.

In the time of Christ, the Old Testament which was the only part of our Bible which they had, was spoken of, in a collective way, as "the Scriptures." Referring to a part which we now speak of as the Pentateuch, or the books of the law, they spoke of it as "the law," "Moses," or "the law of Moses;" the prophecies were called "the Prophets," and all the other books as "Psalms" or "Holy Writings."

Other names were sometimes used to designate, such as the "book of the covenant," etc., but not so generally.

Perhaps no one knows the exact time when this book began to be called "the Bible," or "Holy Bible," but it was probably only a few centuries ago. We all recognize the name "Holy Bible" as very appropriate and precious.

Suggestions for Studying the Bible.

1. Study it; do not merely read it. It is possible to read in a mechanical way, merely pronouncing words, without entering at all into the spirit of the message.

2. Study it reverently. It is God speaking to you, making known to you His will concerning you. Its message is enforced by all the potency of the skies. It will be, in the day of judgment, the message of your acquittal, or condemnation.

3. Study it prayerfully. God's book is divine, and must be divinely interpreted. In order that it be divinely interpreted we must have a divine interpreter. God has sent the Holy Spirit into the world, and this is a part of His mission, to take the things of God and reveal them to us. Let us ask for His assistance in studying the Bible.

4. Study it more frequently than any other book. Make it your constant companion.

5. "Study the Bible in the light and faith of Christ, who is the Alpha and Omega, the essence and center of it. Without Him it is a sealed book; with Him it is the power and wisdom of God unto salvation, the very gate of heaven."

6. Employ every available source of help, such as grammars, dictionaries, concordances, commentaries, etc. Do not presume upon God's goodness to give you, in a supernatural way, the things for which He has endowed you with a capacity to learn for yourself. Do your best, then leave to God the rest.

7. Commit to memory much of the word of God. Almost any ordinary person can commit such portions as Palms, the Sermon on the Mount, the Good Shepherd chapter, the Vine and Branch chapter, the Intercessory Prayer of Jesus, the Charity chapter, etc. Store your memory full of God's word. It will not only enrich you in your own personal experience, but will be valuable resource in service, and become an ever-increasing delight.

UPPER ROOM MESSAGES

(*Fourth Printing*)

By

J. A. HUFFMAN, D. D.

¶ What did Jesus teach concerning the Holy Spirit?

¶ What is the true worth of man?

¶ What does it cost to be a Disciple of Christ?

¶ Why kept, and not taken?

¶ What are the little vine-destroying foxes?

¶ How may we be good stewards of God?

¶ What about the future of the wicked?

¶ How great is God's Book?